EVERY THURSDAY ✶ ✶ ✶ EVERY WEEK

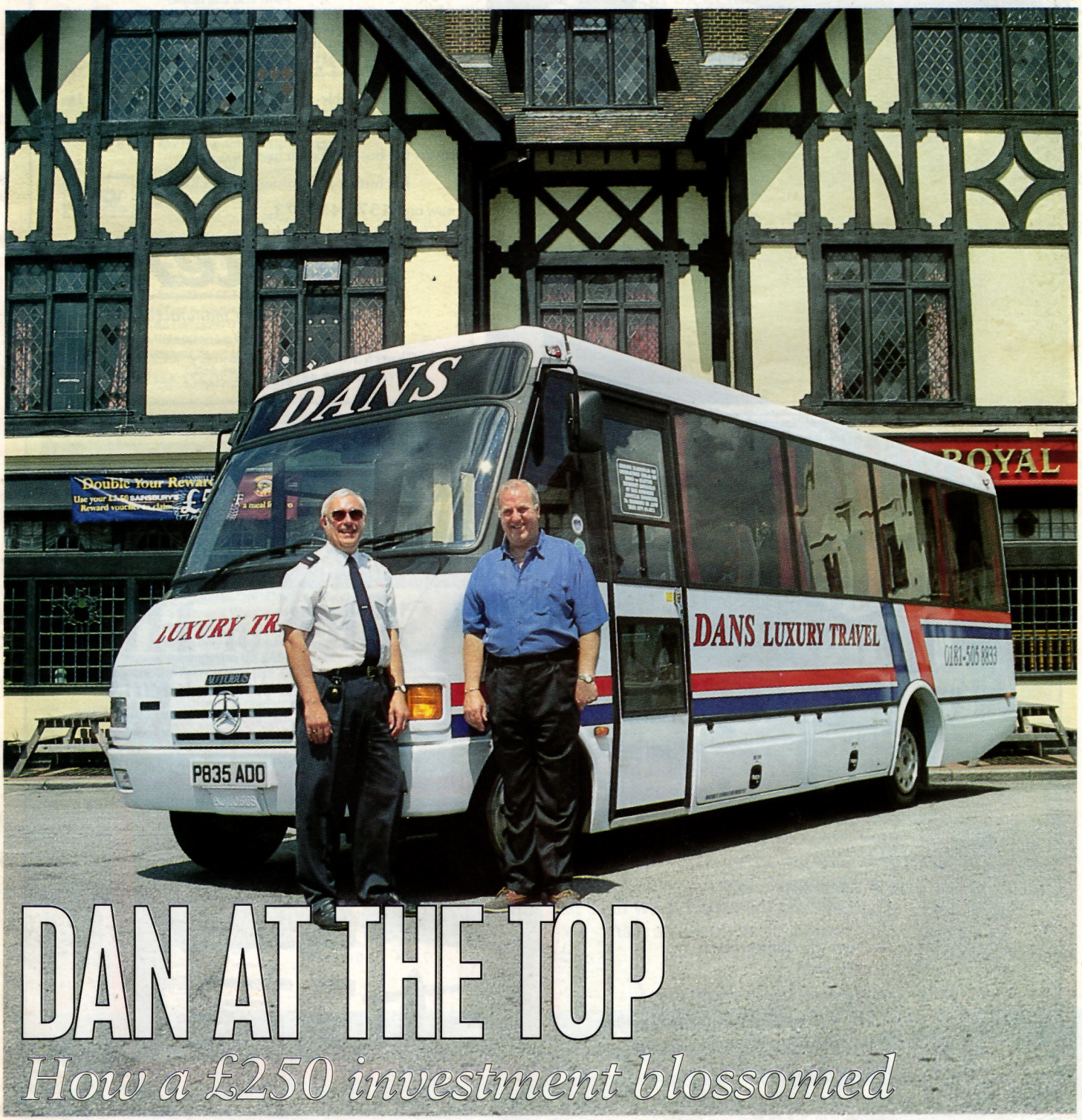
CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly Issue 282 14 August 1997

AN ALL MERCEDES-BENZ BUS

Taking the lid off the new lowfloor

CHANGE AT THE TOP AT UVG

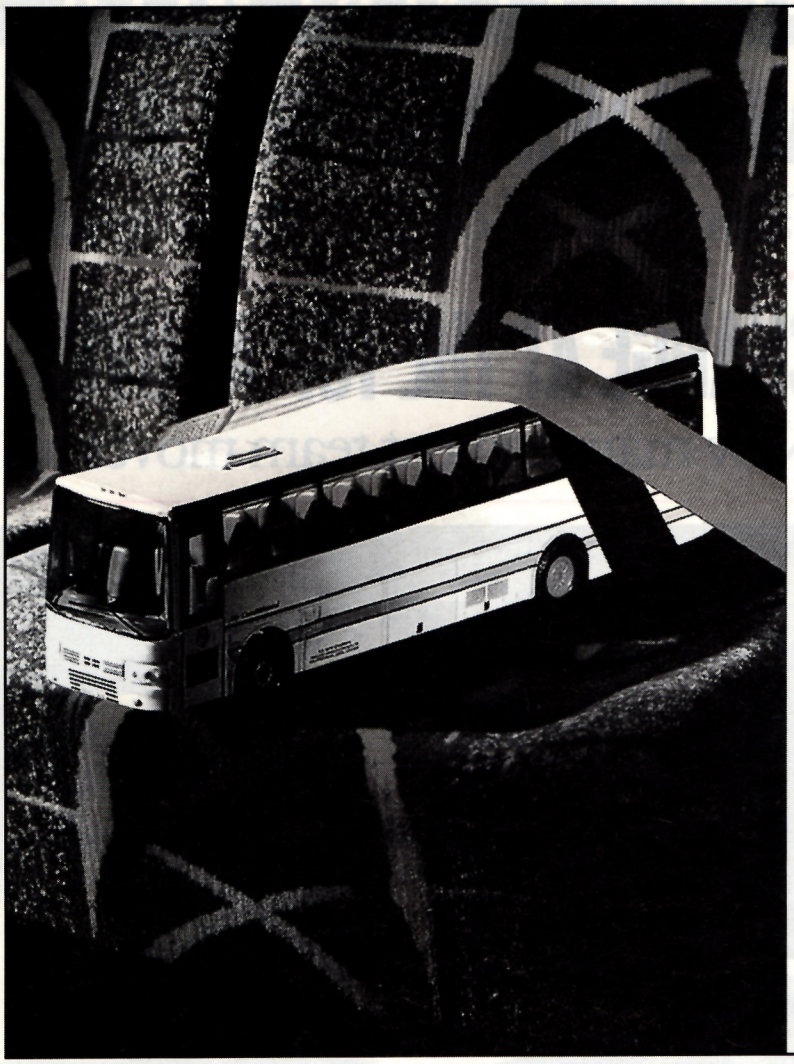
New management team moves in



DAN AT THE TOP

How a £250 investment blossomed

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: PSV News 4-10 ■ Tour News 12 & 13 ■ Legal News 14 & 15 ■ Marksman 16 ■ Diary 19 ■ Letters 20 ■ CBW Awards 22 & 23 ■ Cover Story 24&25 ■ Deals 26 & 27 ■ Inside Europe 28 ■ People 51



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EDITORIAL

Training: running out of time

THE DRIVER TRAINING crisis is not just rumour - it's a fact.

The issue has serious ramifications for the PSV industry and the Confederation of Passenger Transport is urging its members to write to MPs in the forlorn hope that our elected representatives will respond to the challenge.

We not only wish them luck but actively encourage all *CBW* readers to do the same, because something has to be done now.

The answer to the problem lies in the hands of the DSA which, by its actions, has demonstrated a lamentable lack of understanding of the special circumstances which apply to vocational driving in general and PCV licensing in particular.

It may be unkind to suggest a cavalier attitude but, faced with the evidence, it is very tempting. Why hasn't the DSA taken advantage of the expertise that the industry is prepared to offer free of charge?

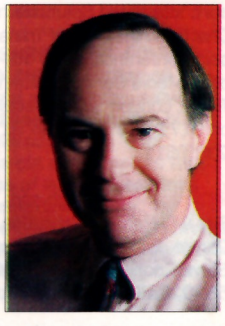
A working party with top-level representatives from both sides is a must. But we're running out of time as the standard of training is rapidly being diluted just when the emphasis should be on improved quality to meet the challenges of a dynamic industry.

Whose side is the SMMT on?

THE SMMT is an industry trade association? But which industry, we ask. In a publicity fact sheet published this month, it claims that trucks, vans, coaches and buses are so commonplace that they are taken for granted.

As if to reinforce the feel of complacency radiated by this statement the document leaves its readers in no doubt whose side the SMMT is on. In an unforgivable confused negative statement it says: "Britain's bus fleet is an ageing one. Approximately 55 per cent of coaches are more than 10 years old. In London, some are double that age. However, in 1996 the UK's bus operators took delivery of 1,444 standard-size single-deck buses." Does this mean the car is king, long live the car?

Now it's every Thursday - every week



AS THE PSV industry's leading weekly magazine, *Coach and Bus Week* has not only consistently brought you the best news and most informed features but, in our constant search to improve the service to our customers, your favourite magazine will now be on your desk every Thursday... every week. Now you, too, can be first each week with your classified ads, giving you that all-important competitive advantage.

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events

1-2 September: Bus deregulation 10 years on, PTIU conference, Mechanics Institute, Princess Street, Manchester. Details on 0161 236 1970, fax 0161 228 6339, e-mail: ptiu@premier.co.uk

1-4 September: PTRC European Transport Forum, Brunel University. International Conference to Highlight Quality Buses. Details on 0181 741 1516, fax 0181 741 5993, e-mail ptrc@cityscape.co.uk

1-5 September: 25th European Transport Forum Annual Meeting, Brunel University, Uxbridge, London. Details and full copies of call for papers on 0181 741 5993, fax 0181 741 5993

17 September: Strategic Roads Review - one-day CIT conference to assist in consultation following DoT's public consultation launch in July to determine the role roads shouls play in an intergrated transport policy. London Marriott Hotel. Details from Shereen Whittaker on 0171 233 7600

21 September: Titan Day, Amberley Museum, West Sussex. Exhibitors contact Alan Lambert, 7 Nursery Close, Emsworth, Hants P10 7SP

23 September: Green Commuter Plans, A Better Way To Work, Environment Council Seminar, 0930 to 1400 hrs, Birmingham Repertory Theatre Conference Centre, Birmingham. Details from Larissa Barrett on 0171 881 7611, fax 0171 730 9941

7 October: Passenger Transport: Integrated Solutions. Chartered Institute of Transport Conference at the Millbank Media Centre, Millbank Tower, London SW1. Details on 0171 233 7600, fax 0171 233 7611

9-11 October: Coach and Bus 97, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Contact Steve Rooney, on 0171 240 5800, fax 0171 240 5805

16-18 October: Mitcar, Paris. Details 00 33 141 299727

23 January 1998: *CBW's* Coach Industry Awards, Metropole Hotel, NEC. Full details in a future issue of this magazine.

5 February: CPT Annual Dinner, Grosvenor House, London W1

German integral with British interior spearheads UK drive

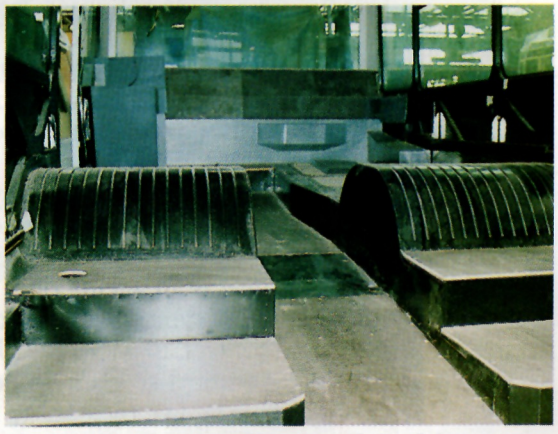
Mercedes mounts lowfloor challenge

By Mike Morgan

EXCLUSIVE FIRST details of the new Mercedes-Benz lowfloor challenger have been revealed, providing evidence the German manufacturer is determined to make a impact on the UK market.

New to this country, the 12-metre 0405N is a mirror image of the standard vehicle built for the European market. It is a steel-framed integral built in the Mannheim plant but, for the UK market, the interior will be fitted out by UVG in Waterlooville, near Portsmouth. Apart from the interior, the 0405N will look identical to its German cousins, with an offset rear T-drive configuration providing a stepless floor from front to rear. It will be badged as a Mercedes, sold by Mercedes and supported by Mercedes.

Scheduled for launch at the Coach and Bus 97 show in October, the new Merc is believed to have the backing of a significant first order from one of the UK's large bus groups. It is priced at £112,000, providing a serious challenge to the supremacy of the UK's major chassis and body manufacturers in their home market. Mercedes-Benz builds around 4,500 buses a year. Of these 3,500 are citybuses, the majority of which are lowfloor.



Stepless floor is among Merc's selling points

The 0405N is M-B's second generation lowfloor bus which came on stream in 1988. It's UK launch follows in the track of the sister 0405 step-entry bus which made its debut in this country almost seven years ago.

Then first orders were for 20 from GRT Holdings of Aberdeen (subsequently part of FirstBus) which also took an articulated 0405G. Initial build was with Alexander body but production moved to Optare, leading to total sales of around 150 over a five-year period. Production at Optare continues.

However, the lowfloor 0405N does not have a separate chassis. Production at the Mannheim plant follows automotive practice. When the panelled welded steel frame is emersed in the cataphoretic dip trough, it resembles a car body shell, receiving the same anticorrosion treatment - a process that saves 200kg.

Only then are other bits fitted and no subsequent drilling or welding is allowed to disturb the protective coat. Apart from a ZF automatic gearbox, all driveline components are of Mercedes manufacture - as is the steering and front axle.

Once fitted with bonded glazing, electrical components and mechanical units, the bus is transported on a low-loader to UVG for finishing. A plastic fuel tank fits over the offside front wheel.

Air tanks are over the nearside wheelarch and in the rear cove panels. The electrical compartment is in the back wall of the cab.

Mercedes-Benz UK coach

Death of Fred Leach

FRED LEACH, founder of Harold Wood Coaches, Essex, has died suddenly aged 75.

Harold Wood Coaches, which takes its name from the town where it is based, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year after Mr Leach and his brother, Sam, set up the business in 1947 when they were demobed at the end of the Second World War.

The company built its reputation with local groups, providing coaches on private hire to the community, spanning more than two generations.

Although at the height of the coaching boom years, Harold Wood was buying two new coaches each year, it has settled back to a modern fleet of nine coaches.

Mr Leach leaves a wife, Vera, his son, Raymond, and daughter, Pauline. All three work for the family-owned company and Sam Leach says it will be business as usual.

The funeral is 1.30pm tomorrow (Friday) at St Peters Church, Harold Wood.

Government plans a clampdown over

GOVERNMENT PLANS for tougher sanctions against anti-competitive practices could severely limit scope for unfair fare cutting in the UK bus industry.

Proposals contained in a draft Bill published by the DTi are based on European legislation and will replace laws passed in the last 25 years.

"Present competition law is not working well," said president of the Board of Trade Margaret Beckett. "Its reform is long overdue. We need to prevent and remedy anti-competitive behaviour more effectively. We also need to do so efficiently, avoiding any unnecessary burdens on business."

Under the proposals, the Monopolies and Mergers Commission would be replaced by a Competition Commission and anti-competitive action could be halted during investigation.

Mirror image: rhd 0405N bodyshell is built in Germany and shipped to the UK for finishing

and bus manager Ian Soden described the relationship with UVG as a partnership which had been developed as a result of the two companies working closely on vehicles for the welfare and ambulance markets.

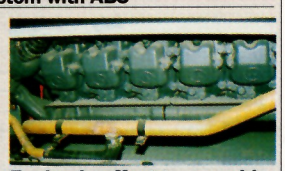
Mr Soden said Mercedes-Benz is fully committed to the UK PSV markets and dismissed suggestions that the German giant had been dipping its toe in the water with earlier full-size products. The difference with the 0405N and the recently announced Vita coach is that they are fully supported by M-B in Milton Keynes.

"You can only grow as fast as you can support the product," said Mr Soden. He said buyers of the new bus would be welcomed to the M-B family, with full training given to the operators' staff before and after delivery of the bus.

UVG's work is restricted to the complete interior and finishing of the exterior, representing a small proportion of added value to the 0405N. The company's new managing director, Fred Edwards, said: "It is a most important project because of the pull-through effect it will have on productivity."

SPECIFICATION

VEHICLE:	Mercedes-Benz 0405N
BODY:	lowfloor citybus interior finished by UVG - up to approx 46 seats
PRICE:	£110,000
ENGINE:	horizontal Mercedes-Benz OM 447 hLA six-cylinder in-line diesel
POWER:	213 bhp (157 kW) @ 2,200 rpm
TORQUE:	700 Lbf ft (950 Nm) @ 1,100 rpm
GEARBOX:	ZF four-speed 4HP500 automatic
STEERING:	M-B power steering type LS7F; 550 mm steering wheel adjustable for height and rake
BRAKES:	dual-circuit air system with ABS drums on front and rear handbrake - spring release bus stop brake system - electropneumatic operation



Engine is offset to nearside

stiffer penalties in unfair competition

At the moment competitors can be driven out of business during an investigation with no redress or compensation. But the proposals will bring in fines for serious abuses of market power and competitors and customers damaged by anti-competitive behaviour will be entitled to seek damages.

The DTi specifically cited the example of fare-cutting competition in the bus industry in support of the draft Bill. Under the proposals, a bus company accused of undercutting competitors to drive them out of business could be told to increase prices pending the outcome of the inquiry.

The proposals were launched in the same week that MMC chairman Sir Graeme Odgers resigned and the Government announced a review of the MMC's FirstBus divestment order in Scotland (see right).

OFT may halt sell-off

FIRSTBUS could be spared the need to sell off £40 million of turnover in Scotland following the announcement of an OFT review of a previous MMC divestment order.

The MMC told FirstBus to dispose of a sizeable chunk of its Glasgow operations after it radically increased its presence in Scotland with a £110 million takeover of Strathclyde Buses last year.

The OFT review has been ordered by the Government and follows strenuous representations by FirstBus. The UK's largest bus company claimed the competitive situation in Glasgow had changed dramatically since the MMC ordered the sell off in January. Two months ago, Stagecoach entered the local market with a significant network of new routes.

The OFT has now confirmed that a review of the MMC report is under way. Competition minister Nigel Griffiths said he would "certainly consider very carefully" the advice given to him by the Director General of the OFT.

in brief

■ **IT'S THE END OF THE ROAD for one of the oldest coach operators in Rutland as Bland's of Cottesmore ceased trading.**
Ian Bland, who, with Anthony Bland, runs the company which was set up in 1929 by Reginald Bland, was not available for comment but negotiations began immediately with other companies to take over the Bland's services. Blands operated 10 vehicles, mainly on schools and local service. In February 1996 a public inquiry ordered a 14-day O-licence suspension.
Yorkshire Traction subsidiary, Road Car, is to take over the majority of routes which are rural links in the Oakham, Melton Mowbray, Grantham and Stamford area. It is to offer jobs to some of the staff but has not taken over any vehicles or property.
Buckby of Rothwell and Leicester City Bus have also taken on some Rutland Council tendered services and KinchBus of Barrow-on-Soar now operates the Rutland Flyer service.

■ **A WOLVERHAMPTON bus company has had its appeal on restrictions on working hours turned down by a DoE inspector. Banga Travel was appealing against a Wolverhampton Council ban on moving buses before 0745 hrs and after 1900 hrs.**
Owner Parkash Ram Banga said: "We cannot afford to start late any more when Travel West Midlands and other companies start at around 0530 - 0630 hrs. We cannot compete."
But the DoE inspector ruled against the firm, saying that local residents would be disturbed.

■ **SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL is cutting all late-night and Sunday subsidised services in a bid to save cash.**
The cut could lead to the loss of up to 30 services across the county.
The council blames "chronic underfunding" and says the cuts are necessary to protect day-time services.

■ **OXFORDSHIRE schools and education services are to lose nearly £3 million in funding. Councillors voted a further £6 million cut from the budget they set earlier this year in a bid to protect services. The new budget means education, libraries and roads maintenance all now face serious further reductions in funding.**

in brief

■AUSTRIA has fallen into line with most other European Union countries and is now imposing VAT on transport. Operators from throughout the EU travelling into Austria will now have to pay VAT at 10% on the transport element of a tour or journey. The ruling has been backdated to January 1995, so journeys made since then will need to be declared on first registrations. The tax can be reclaimed. The CPT is urging operators to register as soon as possible: The Austrian Tax Office, Finanzamt Graz Stadt, Referat fur Auslandische Unternehmer, Conrad von Hotzendorfstrasse 14-18, A8018 Graz, Austria. Tel: 0043 316 88 10. Fax: 0043 316 81 76 08.

■THE WORLD'S first mobile bus lane enforcement cameras (*CBW*, 2 August) are now in use in London. The cameras have been fitted to 15 Cowie Leaside and MTL London buses and will be backed up by five static roadside cameras. Total cost is £1 million. First prosecutions are expected this month. The penalty for bus lane offences is £20.

■NORTH WESTERN ROAD CAR totally denies having carried out any maintenance-related work on any vehicles owned or operated by Raymond Peers, trading as Merseypride Coaches and South Liverpool Transport. In a recent public inquiry Mr Peers said inspections had been carried out by North Western Bus Co (*CBW*, 9 August).

■STAGECOACH is to sell its 51% stake in Stagecoach Malawi to fellow shareholder Adare Investment for a nominal consideration. Net assets of Stagecoach Malawi at April 30 were £5.4 million and the company contributed turnover of £13.2 million and profits of £200,000 for the year to April 30. Chairman Brian Souter complained of an increase in competition from unlicensed minibuses when he announced Stagecoach's record profits of £120 million (*CBW* 26 July). Stagecoach Kenya continues.

Operation Tourist results in 1,471 vehicles being checked

Crackdown on coaches

By Mike Morgan

THERE WAS NO hiding place last weekend when the much publicised Operation Tourist swung into action across the south of England.

Co-ordinated by Avon and Somerset Police, the coach safety offensive resulted in 1,471 vehicles being checked. Examiners found 171 of the coaches had faults which merited the issue of a PG9. Of these 50 were deemed to be serious enough to warrant an immediate prohibition.

Last year Operation Tourist checked 1,337 vehicles. Officers discovered 174 had defects and they issued 67 immediates.

The checks were all held at recognised coach stopping points, reducing inconvenience to passengers to no more than 30 minutes. It took place between 0800 hrs and 1600 hrs on Saturday, involved 16 police forces and 157 Vehicle Inspectorate staff. TV and press were invited.

While the press office for the Avon and Somerset Police focused on the horror stories such as the coach with a finger-tight steering wheel nut or the one with a damaged battery, the results were a marginal improvement on last year with just 3.4% of the sample having a serious safety defect compared with 5% in 1996.

Although another big-combined operation is not on the cards this year, operators are warned to expect more spot checks throughout the Summer.

●GROWTH IN SALES of new larger PSVs helped improve PSV test failure rates which fell slightly for the fifth successive year, according to the Vehicle Inspectorate's second annual report on its effectiveness. However, the VI reports strong regional variation - 21.5% in south eastern and 39% in Scotland. It also says that the results show that older PSVs can be as well maintained as their younger counterparts and larger operators have the best test presentation.

●FOR £25 an operator can get a printout of the VI data record of the company performance on annual test and spot checks - applications with O-licence number and cheque to: Vehicle Inspectorate, Management Information Unit, Welcombe House, 91 The Strand, Swansea SA1 2DH).

OPERATION TOURIST - 1997 RESULTS

SITE	No. CHECKED	PG9(I)	PG9(D)	Offences
M5 Taunton Deane	61	3	3	25
M5 Sedgemoor	73	1	2	14
M5 Gordano	54	1	5	5
A303 Podimore	30	2	3	6
M5 Granada Exeter	43	1	5	7
A30Sourton Cross	35	1	2	7
Bournemouth	34	1	2	0
Weymouth	22	0	0	0
M25 Junction 31	54	1	6	27
M5 Michaelwood	91	3	8	43
M3 Fleet	96	5	4	43
M27 Rownhams	42	5	3	37
A3 Liphook	58	0	1	9
Ryde, Isle of Wight	15	2	2	0
M2 Farthings Corner	35	2	3	7
M25 South Mimms	95	1	6	49
M4 Heston	47	2	7	9
M1	18	0	0	5
M6 Keele	74	2	9	6
M25 Clacketts Lane	73	3	8	14
Brighton	55	0	7	18
Littlehampton	7	0	0	0
M4 Membury	43	2	3	4
M4 Reading	39	0	3	3
M1 Newport Pagnall	83	4	8	38
M40 Cherwell	17	1	3	9
M5 Strensham	41	2	1	0
M5 Frankley	64	2	9	3
M4 Leigh Delamere	72	3	7	42
TOTALS	1471	50	121	430

Coach and Bus Registrations

	July 1997	July 1996	Year to Date 1997	%	1996	%
Volvo	92	89	1039	44.8	1008	45.1
Dennis	52	40	758	32.7	600	26.9
Scania	13	10	130	5.6	201	9.0
Optare	8	7	112	4.8	128	5.7
DAF Bus	11	2	94	4.0	94	4.2
Bova	1	1	36	1.6	36	1.6
Mercedes-Benz	0	3	22	0.9	25	1.1
IvecoBus	1	4	21	0.9	16	0.7
Others	1	14	109	4.7	126	5.7
TOTAL	179	170	2321	100	2234	100

Coach

	July 1997	July 1996	Year to Date 1997	%	1996	%
Volvo	18	31	381	46.7	552	55.1
Dennis	4	2	148	18.1	124	12.4
DAF Bus	3	2	73	8.9	67	6.7
Scania	1	4	65	8.0	100	10.0
Bova	1	1	36	4.4	36	3.6
IvecoBus	1	4	21	2.6	16	1.6
Others	1	14	92	11.3	106	10.6
TOTAL	29	58	816	100	1001	100

Bus

	July 1997	July 1996	Year to Date 1997	%	1996	%
Volvo	74	58	658	43.7	456	37.0
Dennis	48	38	610	40.5	476	38.6
Optare	8	7	112	7.4	128	10.4
Scania	12	6	65	4.3	101	8.2
DAF Bus	8	0	21	1.4	27	2.2
Mercedes-Benz	0	3	22	1.5	25	2.0
Others	0	0	17	1.1	20	1.6
TOTAL	150	112	1505	100	1233	100

The above table details all vehicles on designated PSV underframes registered last month in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of man and Channel Islands. *Source: SMMT*

Full-size PSV sales up 3.9% in '97 but...

REGISTRATIONS of full-size coaches and buses are up 3.9% in the first seven months of 1997 but behind the headline good news lies an increase in the decline in the number of new coaches taking to the road.

Coach sales which slumped by 16% up to the end of June have slipped further with the fall in demand now measured at 18.5%. Volvo remains market leader despite a fall-off in registrations from 552 to 381 but Dennis' performance has beat the trend with a 19% increase.

However, as one sector slides, another romps ahead to compensate.

Full-size bus registrations are now 22% higher than this time last year with the rate of increase accelerating by the month.

In July the number of buses delivered to operators jumped by 34% compared with July 1996.

However, this growth market has favoured just two manufacturers. Volvo has increased its bus market share to 43.7% from 37% and Dennis is also on a rising curve with 40.5%.

●WHILE the new vehicle focus in last week's issue of *CBW* was on the race to get the first R-reg coaches and buses on the road, spare some thought for the last P-reg which we believe is a B10M bus for Stagecoach registered on 30 July.

Let us not forget that, in the cold light of day, there is nothing to choose between the earning power of a bus registered in July and an otherwise identical vehicle registered in August.

Start with the best ...

and make it better!

The Vario Nouvelle has had a distinguished history. Its predecessor won the Coach Industry Awards', Midicoach of the Year for 1995/6 and was voted winner again by operators for 1996/7.

So what is our recipe for success?

Well, first take a Mercedes Benz 0814D, a vehicle renowned for engineering excellence and quality. The kind of quality that delivers: a 4.25 litre turbo intercooled engine with electronic management typically returning 22 miles per gallon and an expected one million kms lifespan, ZF gearbox, service intervals up to 45,000 kms, all round disc brakes and air suspension to rear.

Then add: air operated swing door, 29 plus courier seating capacity on full 450 mm seats, fixed seats with lap and diagonal belts, reclining seats with lap belts and 3.3 cubic metres of luggage space.

Backed by after market support that is second to none, the result is a Midicoach that's not just better, it's the market leader.

THE VARIO NOUVELLE
FROM

AUTOBUS

THE BUSINESS AS USUAL

AUTOBUS Hellaby Lane Business Park, Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8HN. A division of the Optare group

For more information on the Vario Nouvelle and our range of buses and coaches please phone 01709 700220 or fax us on 01709 701530

Bova lends out workers in off-peak

FUTURA Coachbuilder Bova has extended its successful job pooling arrangement to include another Dutch company.

Until now the job pool consisted of Bova, petrol pump manufacturer Sclumberger in Bladel and fence manufacturer Heras Hekwerk in Oirschot. All three companies have to deal with production peaks. At Bova, the peak is in the first six months of the year and at the other two companies the peak is in the second six months.

The pooling system means more than 10% of the staff employed during the peak period at Bova move to one of the two other pool participants in the second six months of the year. And now Bova has signed up another company - trailer makers Saris Aanhangers - into the arrangement. Saris Aanhangers' production peak is April to October.

"In the past, production in our peak season rose by 40%," said Thomas Bakel, head of human resources at Bova.

"And we had to rely on more than 50 employees from temping agencies. Now that number has fallen considerably," he said.

There are now 40 workers in the job pool and such is Bova's enthusiasm for the project, they are now to be offered a permanent contract of employment.

Moves part of parent firm Mayflower's drive for profits

Belfast to be assembly-only as Alexander seeks China base

By Mark Barton

WALTER ALEXANDER'S Belfast factory is to become an assembly-only operation and the company is actively seeking to set up an additional manufacturing base in China.

The moves are part of parent company Mayflower's much-publicised drive for greater efficiency and were confirmed in the same week that Walter Alexander posted record first-half profits of £3.7 million on turnover up 14% to £45.1 million. Its order book currently stands at £64 million - some £7 million ahead of the same point last year. Mayflower group as a whole recorded pre-tax profits up 58% to £16.1 million on sales 36% ahead at £191.5 million.

Walter Alexander's Mallusk factory in Belfast recently shed 50 jobs as part of a restructuring that saw local managing director Mike Ford Hutchinson move to Falkirk to head up the product development team (*CBW*, 21 June, 1997) and Ken Keane take over responsibility for day-to-day running of Belfast as works manager. Now the search for greater plant profitability has led to manufacturing being concentrated entirely in Falkirk.

"Starting from either late this year or early next year, the plan is for Belfast to become an assembly facility taking kits from Falkirk," commercial director Anthony Percy told *CBW*. "But the Ultra body on Volvo B10ML is built in Belfast only and that will remain the case."

The eventual aim was to have a single company sales team and order book, said Mr Percy, with bus orders split between Falkirk's six production lines and Belfast's three production lines according to available build slots and customer preference.

Following the huge increase in earnings, Walter Alexander is set to create 50 new jobs at Falkirk and is confident of further growth at home and abroad. Currently half of Walter Alexander's sales are accounted for in the Far East - either as fully-built-up vehicles or knock-down kits.

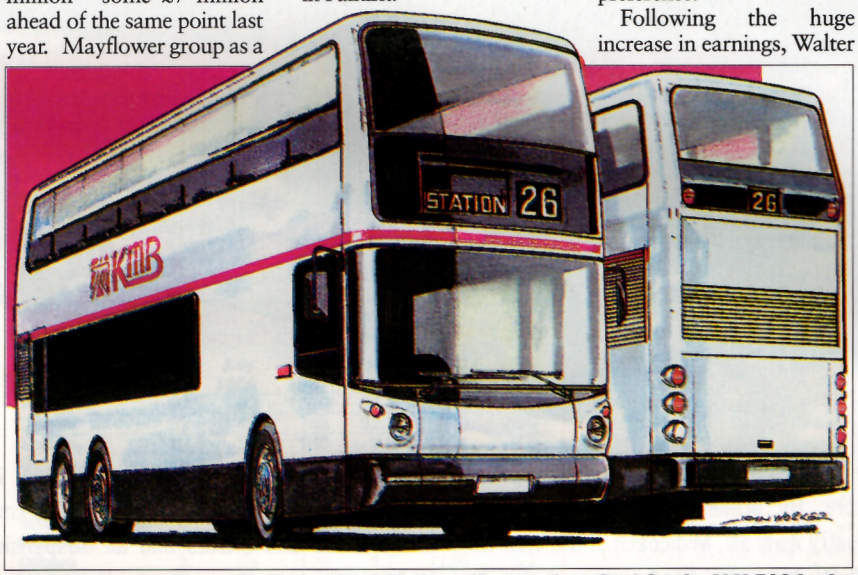
Mr Percy said the group was "looking at China as a possible manufacturing base and that under Chinese law that has to be done through a joint venture."

The company also believes there are opportunities in other new markets - like Sweden, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Hong Kong has traditionally been a strong export market for Walter Alexander and the first new ALX 500 body on Dennis' low floor tri-axle Trident decker chassis is already with Kowloon Motor Bus.

One of HK's more progressive operators, the company has ordered a further 150 air-conditioned examples to cover the route between the new airport and the city.

Due to be unveiled at the Coach and Bus show in October, what Mr Percy describes as the "beautifully styled, perfectly built" body starts from "well over £100,000." Walter Alexander not being primary supplier means chassis is extra.



'Beautifully styled, perfectly built': 150 Hong Kong orders for tri-axle ALX 500 body

Clever funding boosts CNG Merton fleet to UK's biggest

THE LONDON BOROUGH of Merton now has the largest municipal fleet of Compressed Natural Gas powered vehicles in the country.

Part financed by a £38,000 grant from the Energy Saving Trust's Powershift programme, Merton's CNG fleet now totals 24 vehicles out of a total fleet of around 200.

It includes nine UVG-bodied Iveco Ford mini coaches used on social service work, Ford Courier vans, and six Iveco Ford refuse collection trucks.

The CNG fleet uses the quick-fill refuelling facilities at the council's Garth Rd depot, financed, built and operated by British Gas.

The gas station represents a significant investment by British Gas and will be made available to other users of Compressed Natural Gas in the area.

Currently 32 local authorities and 50 other organisations are using CNG vehicles in the UK and there are 18 gas stations around the country with more planned.

The Merton CNG fleet was launched last week by environment minister Michael Meacher.

Coach is king in London to Manchester travel contest

COACH has triumphed over helicopter, plane, train and car in offering the best combination of convenience, comfort, cost and speed in getting from Manchester to London.

National Express emerged victorious in a challenge between a dozen of Manchester's top property executives, each using a different mode of transport to get between Canal Street, Manchester and the offices of property magazine *Estates Gazette* (event organisers) in London's Wardour Street.

National Express' passenger caught the 9.15am coach from Manchester, arriving at Victoria at 1.30pm.

He then took a taxi to the finish, with his journey costing just £19.70. Only two executives travelling by motorcycle made the journey for less. Fastest between the two points was helicopter (2hrs and 35 mins), with coach out of the running. Cheapest was motorcycle (£9.75 and £10.50), with coach a close third. And most convenient was limousine, with coach second. But coach scored second to none overall.

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P Holmes, Fleet Engineer, Trathens Travel Services Ltd.

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E Marsden, Chief Engineer, Good News Travels

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Billy Beaton, Parks of Hamilton (coach hirers) Ltd. Blantyre

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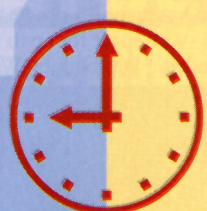
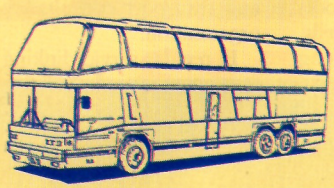
R Osbourne, Travelrich International





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The Genuine Alternative

Bodybuilder now supplying 287 buses as £2 million added to total order

FirstBus ups Wrights order 16%

By Mike Morgan

FIRSTBUS has increased its initial order for 247 12-metre lowfloor Wrights-bodied buses by 16 per cent, adding over £2 million to the total value.

Wrights will now supply 112 Renown buses on Volvo B10BLE chassis and 175 Scania Axcess-ultralows. Both vehicle types incorporate the Floline ramped floor system launched earlier this year as a way to eliminate the gallery effect at the rear of a lowfloor bus and, although FirstBus has specified bonded glazing, gasket-mounted side windows are an option.

The Northern Ireland-based bodybuilder has also unveiled its first vehicles with the new standard FirstBus interior. In a major meet-the-people exercise, a Greater Manchester Renown and a Greater Glasgow Axcess-ultralow are visiting towns and cities throughout the FirstBus operating territory.

In common with all new buses for FirstBus, they sport a new-look interior with aqua green and dark purple Scanflex seats trimmed in matching Holdsworth moquette. Handrails and stanchions are also aqua green, while the front platform and centre aisles have light purple flooring plus double glazing and a heating system which is a combination of roof-mounted blowers and perimeter radiators.

First Renown sports new Greater Manchester livery for dedicated services

The Renown is one of 21 to join the Greater Manchester fleet and is the first production model with the Floline floor. It also introduces a new ivory livery with passion blue flash which is similar to schemes used by some other FirstBus companies and replaces Greater Manchester's orange for heavily promoted, dedicated services which will be operated on an improved timetable with drivers specifically trained in customer care. Nine of them are scheduled to launch the first of these services in Wigan in November.

FirstBus' new Floline interior

Germans using solar-powered/battery artic for a regular service

AIMED at the evaluation in everyday service of a novel battery-electric driveline in combination with roof-mounted photo-voltaic cells, an unusual 12.6-metre long articulated 'people mover' is being used by a major German automotive engineering and transport consultancy organisation.

In regular service linking the conference and training centre of DEKRA in the Black Forest with an associated hotel, the 48-passenger bus - with space for up to 18 standees - was built by Walter Vetter, a German coach and bus specialist, formerly well known for its work in close co-operation with Daimler-Benz but now concentrating on the development of battery-electric passenger vehicles for use in car-free zones and mountain resorts.

DEKRA 'people mover': 12.6 metres long with battery-electric driveline

The DEKRA articulated bus, built in full compliance with C&U regulations, was designed by DDC of Ulm under the direction of Luan Hasnay, who has been responsible for a number of significant styling contributions to the European heavy-vehicle sector. The appearance of the bus follows closely that of the DEKRA promotional show van already seen at a number of international events and trade fairs. Because of its use over relatively short distances - its regular route is under two miles - it was felt that a diesel-powered vehicle could not be operated at optimum engine temperature and would thus be subject to unduly high consumption and increased wear. Furthermore the route, in a scenic part of the Black Forest, also takes the bus through a residential area, so electric traction was selected. Lead-acid battery packs with a total weight of 2340 kg provide an operating range of up to 40 km. Operating speed is 25 km/h and, with vehicle-mounted charging equipment, normal practice is to recharge overnight. The batteries contribute almost 25 per cent of the unladen weight of 10,700 kg. Axles two and three are driven, with the 80 V Volk/Best 18 kW motors arranged to act as generators to feed braking.

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49 recliners, grey/blue/red moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, driver's berth, double tinted double glazed side windows, curtains, water boiler, coolbox, seat belts, AIR CONDITIONING, additional fuel tank, finished metallic silver/duo blue.
M.O.T. APRIL 1998

1996 (August) DENNIS JAVELIN GX300 NEOPLAN TRANSLINER SHD 12M

SUTRAK AIR CONDITIONING, 50 Keil recliners complete with seat belts, O/S rear sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, kitchenette with water boiler, sink and fridge, Blaupunkt colour monitor and video, Webasto with timer, power entrance door, central locking system, finished white/red.
NOMINAL MILEAGE ONLY

1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE 12M

48/50 recliners, beige/orange moquette, rear sunken demountable toilet, continental door, SUTRAK AIR CONDITIONING, double glazed tinted side windows, blinds and decorative curtains, aircraft style lockers to hatracks, courier seat, fully carpeted, no rear window, Eberspacher pre-heater, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished cream.
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1992 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

48/50 recliners, grey/red moquette, rear floor mounted toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, sun blinds, water boiler, courier seat, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white. **M.O.T. MARCH 1998**

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53 reclining seats, finished all white. 1 ONLY

1991 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49/53 recliners, grey/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, blinds, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white. **M.O.T. OCTOBER 1997**

1990 BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M

51 seats, beige/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, wired TV/video, finished all white.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

1989 (August) DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

51 recliners, brown/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water bolier, wired TV/video, finished white/blue.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1998

1989 SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, aircraft style lockers to hatracks, water boiler, fridge, wired TV/video, TELMA retarder, finished all white.
M.O.T. APRIL 1998

1989 BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M

49 recliners, red/grey/black moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, driver's sleeping berth, drink's machine,wired TV/video, finished all white.
M.O.T. APRIL 1998

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet O/S rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

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COACH OPERATOR

Numbers up by 50% at French theme park as special events such as firework

UK coach market dominates

By William Golden

THE number of coach groups from the UK visiting Disneyland Paris has increased by more than 50%, making it the best performing market for the resort in Europe.

Special themed packages, such as last year's Fireworks Festival, have been responsible for the marked increase in volume and these special events now account for 40% of all UK Disneyland Paris sales from November to February.

Details of more special events this year and next were unveiled by Disneyland Paris at a seminar for key coach operators and group travel organisers at Planet Hollywood, in London, last week. The event also included a special preview of *Hercules*, Walt Disney Pictures' latest animated film, which is on general release from 10 October.

Peter Illtyd Welch, head of commercial affairs, said: "Disneyland Paris has become a truly year-round short break destination. We have introduced a series of successful themed events throughout the year - some specifically for the UK market - and this has ensured that our operators and agents always have something new to sell, and that our guests are constantly being given new reasons to return."

Mr Welch said that the park's first Firework Festival attracted 25,000 British visitors, with the majority of them travelling by coach. "We had such a terrific response from our key partners that we planned a second festival for this year," he said.

"This has sold out already and our overall sales at this stage currently equal our entire Winter trade through this distribution channel for last year.

"The exchange rate is very much in our favour at the moment and this, plus our special events, will undoubtedly ensure that the 1997/98 season is a great success for us all."

Mike Wagner, manager of product marketing in France, said there will be two firework events this year, on 3 November and 6 November. Before that, the park will be staging *California Dream*, a festival celebrating the West Coast of America, from 30 August to 12 October. A Halloween Festival will be held on 31 October for the first time, with Frontierland transformed into a ghost town.

Disneyland's Christmas season starts on 8 November, with a *Nutcracker* scene, and on that date *Hercules*, the hero of the latest Disney movie, will appear every day at noon in the *Zero to Hero Happening*, a small interactive parade.

Events in 1998 kick off with Disneyland's first Carnival period, from 13 January, while March sees the return of the Celtic Festival, complete with a St Patrick's Day Parade.

Disneyland Paris will be the only Disney theme park to retain an electrical parade into 1998 and, from April, there will be a new parade celebrating 60 years of Disney animation. April also sees the opening of the Winnie the Pooh season, which should be a major attraction for the UK market.

Shaw recipe for group sales success

HARRY SHAW CITY CRUISERS was awarded a special Mousecar award at the event for being the Disneyland Paris Group Travel Operator of the Year. The Coventry-based operator has sent more than 35,000 people to the park in the past year. Bob Coles (centre), group and promotions manager, is pictured receiving the award from Peter Illtyd Welch (left) and Michael Linnane, account manager group sales, Disneyland Paris.

Shuttle shuttle opens up the day market

A DAILY coach service to France is being operated by Le Shuttle throughout August, enabling foot passengers to travel to the Continent for as little as £13.50.

Duo-Line, which has been established by Stagecoach and Caron Voyages, departs from Canterbury at 7.15am and picks up at Folkestone Harbour, Folkestone Bus Station and the Tesco car park at Cheriton. Return journeys are from Boulogne and the bureau information centre at Le Shuttle terminal in Calais.

A return ticket starts at £13.50 and there are special rates for families and groups. Children under six travel free.

Tickets are purchased direct from the driver, subject to availability, or may be reserved in advance.

Special policy for CTC members

A NEW policy specifically designed for Coach Tourism Council (CTC) members that includes an option for drivers to extend cover to include business travel has been launched by Travellers Protection Services (TPS).

TPS, which is committed to the coach holiday industry and recently became a member of the CTC, is offering the discounted travel insurance policy to all CTC members, including their staff and families, from as little as £26 per person. It is valid for all holidays taken in a year and includes two weeks Winter sports cover at no extra cost.

Another exclusive benefit is that drivers and couriers working on tours in the UK and Europe can upgrade their cover for a supplement of £4.20 (plus Insurance Purchase Tax) per person, making it an ideal scheme for operators planning to provide cover as a staff benefit.

The scheme is underwritten by UK Insurance Ltd, another member of the CTC.

For immediate cover or more information call TPS on 01603 767699.

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spectaculars provide sparkling business opportunities for operators

bookings to Disneyland Paris

Coasting along: some operators couldn't wait to get in the spirit for the *California Dream Festival*, which is being staged from 30 August to 12 October. Pictured playing their own version of West Coast sports are (from left) Peter Iiltyd Welch (kneeling with bat); Eiron Jones, of Diamond & Glantawe Holidays; Stuart Appleby, of Appleby Coaches; John Winter, of Seamarks; and John Wales, director of sales, Planet Hollywood

EUROWATCH

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	26C/79F	Madrid	27C/81F
Athens	33C/91F	Oslo	26F/79F
Berlin	22C/72F	Paris	21C/70F
Brussels	27C/81F	Rome	24C/75F
Dublin	16C/61F	Stockholm	26C/79F
Lisbon	23C/73F	Vienna	24C/75F
Luxembourg	24C/75F	Zurich	21/70F

DIESEL PRICES

AA Out and About with AA Roadwatch

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.50	Luxembourg	0.39
Belgium	0.48	Netherlands	0.48
Eire	0.54	Norway	0.66
France	0.48	Portugal	0.47
Germany	0.58	Spain	0.43
Greece	0.39	Sweden	0.54
Italy	0.55	Switzerland	0.55

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	20.85 Sch/£	Italy	2,918 Lire/£
Belgium	61.20 BFr/£	Netherlands	3.32 Gld/£
Denmark	11.35 K/£	Norway	12.20 NKr/£
Eire	1.10 Punt/£	Portugal	299 Es/£
France	9.98 F/£	Spain	248 Pta/£
Germany	2.96 DM/£	Sweden	12.77 SKr/£
Greece	463 D/£	Switzerland	2.41 SFr/£

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Former PSV driver warned and fails to get O-licence increase

MAINTENANCE

A FORMER PSV driver, who set up in business after being badly injured, told a Cardiff disciplinary inquiry his main concern would always be maintenance. Walter Hoggan, who trades as Hoggans European, of 178 Camel Road, Winch, Wem, Swansea, had been called before South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh because of concern over his maintenance standards.

In addition to considering taking action against the licence, Mr Pugh also had before him an application to increase the authorisation from one minibus and six single deckers to two minibuses and six single deckers. Mr Hoggan said that, when he started in business in 1989 he had undertaken to contract out his maintenance to the nearby firm of Morris Coaches.

He had started with one vehicle and he had increased his fleet yearly. Prohibition notices that had been imposed, one of which related to a problem with carpets in a vehicle, were a matter of regret. He claimed that, with the growth of his business, preventative maintenance inspections had on occasions become extended to six weeks from the stated interval of four weeks because of pressure from Morris Coaches.

He was now acquiring premises of his own and he would be undertaking his own maintenance, said Mr Hoggan. He would ensure vehicle inspections were carried out at the proper intervals.

At the commissioner's suggestion, he withdrew his application for the additional vehicle.

It was a good case for no action to be taken but it was not his custom to grant additional vehicles when there had been a maintenance problem, said Mr Pugh.

Mr Hoggan was a gentleman who had listened carefully to the advice he had been given but he must become a bit tougher with his vehicle maintenance contractors.

Issuing Mr Hoggan with a warning about his future maintenance standards, Mr Pugh said he could apply for additional vehicles in six months and, if there was a good report from the Vehicle Inspectorate, he would look favourably on any such application. He added that, if Mr Hoggan was desperate, he could apply earlier.

'Assault not connected with work'

REPUTE

A COACH OPERATOR convicted of common assault was given a warning at a Cardiff disciplinary inquiry about his future conduct.

David Morris, trading as Ace Travel, of 19 Penyware Road, Llanelli, Dyfed, appeared before South Wales deputy traffic commissioner Roger Seymour. Mr Morris told Mr Seymour the assault in January of this year had involved his estranged wife.

He claimed fresh evidence was being sent to the Crown Prosecution Service, saying his solicitor was alleging there had been perjury. He agreed he had lost his appeal to Carmarthen Crown Court against his conviction. Asked about a conviction for allegedly not having a driving licence, Mr Morris insisted his licence had never been revoked.

Taking no action other than to issue Mr Morris with a warning, Mr Seymour said he did so because the assault had not been connected with Mr Morris' business.

There would be no problems if there were no further convictions but, if there were, Mr Morris would face another inquiry. If any of the convictions were quashed, they would be removed from Mr Morris' record, otherwise they would remain. He had to act on the records before him.

Authorisation cut by three vehicles

MAINTENANCE

MAINTENANCE problems have led to Isle of Lewis-based Lochs Motor Transport Ltd's O-licence authorisation being cut from 18 to 15 vehicles by Scottish traffic commissioner Michael Betts. The company, of Cameron Terrace, Leurbost, Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides, appeared at an Inverness disciplinary inquiry. Cutting the authorisation with effect from the end of August, Mr Betts also required the company to produce, by the same date, a detailed explanation of steps taken to improve the areas of shortcomings, plus a current list of the company's vehicles.

Birmingham

Operator escapes with warning and

By Michael Jewell

OPERATION

BIRMINGHAM COACH & BUS has escaped with a warning at a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry over the operation of its registered local services. Last March West Midland deputy traffic commissioner Roger Seymour gave Birmingham Omnibus Co Ltd, trading as Birmingham Coach & Bus, of Cross Quays Business Park, Hallbridge Way, Tipton Road, Tividale, Warley, West Midlands, 4 1/2 months to prove it could operate its 32 local services in accordance with their registered particulars.

He had been considering banning the company from operating any or all of its local services and whether to make an order directing the repayment of fuel duty rebate grant of over £22,000. In giving the company time to prove itself, Mr Seymour said there had been a picture of sloppy timekeeping but the company had claimed it now had the situation in hand and he was going to put that to the test (*CBW*, 22 March).

When the proceedings were continued, Mr Seymour said an intervening report from the Vehicle Inspectorate about the company's maintenance standards had been very satisfactory and the company was to be commended on that.

Andrew Smith, a CENTRO internal audit controller, said he had carried out further observations on 23 June. The Traffic Regulation Condition limiting the stopping of buses to one minute to pick up and set down passengers in Birmingham City Centre was being complied with and he saw a Birmingham Bus inspector on duty, assisting passengers, talking to drivers and changing destination blinds. The services were running to time.

However, at the Merryfield Bus Station some of the scheduled lunchtime services did not run, one of which was subsequently deregistered after it had stopped running. The situation at Halesowen Bus Station had improved to an extent as one of Birmingham Bus' services no longer laid over there. However, there was still a problem of congestion at the Bus Station caused by two operators running on the same route. Some Birmingham Bus vehicles were still not fitted with proper destination blinds and some were still painted white, though it was obvious they were Birmingham Bus vehicles as they had notices in the windows.

The maintenance situation is now

CENTRO had only had one minor complaint from a member of the public in the last four weeks and there had been very little complaint before that. He thought the company's operations were now generally up to standard and as good as any other operator in the area. Mr Seymour said they were never going to get perfection in an urban area such as this with every bus running exactly to time. However, the one issue that did concern him was the problem over destination blinds.

In reply to Barry Prior, for the company, Mr Smith agreed the Birmingham Bus vehicles had always been displaying the correct route number. He agreed there had been a marked reduction in complaints and he commended the company's timetabling. He agreed the weather had been particularly bad on 23June and that tended to exacerbate traffic problems.

Peter Jaques, an independent monitor employed by the Traffic Area, said he had carried out a monitoring exercise in June. The percentage of irregularities was down considerably and the whole operation was very much improved. However, there were still a number of deficiencies and he thought there could still be some improvement in certain areas. Rather too many buses were going round without destinations being displayed. At Halesowen the majority of drivers were waiting for their proper departure times if they arrived on the stand early.

He thought the problem at Halesowen was the bus station rather than the operators. Apart from a blank destination blind, he found the Erd-

Coach & Bus: result

commended for efforts to meet improvement deadline

such that there are fewer breakdowns and vehicles becoming defective - operations manager Philip Mitchell

ington service to be operating as it should. One bus was missing on one of the four West Bromwich services monitored. All the others operated punctually. The Birmingham to Solihull service was badly affected by congestion in Solihull.

He had rather an uncomfortable ride to Solihull as the driver was trying to make the best time he could and on a number of occasions passengers were left behind. He had observed instances of five minutes early running at Erdington, with one bus leaving early for no apparent reason. On two services the registrations appeared to differ from the running cards carried by the drivers. Mr Prior pointed out it had been said in March the Erdington service had been retimed by five minutes to avoid conflict with another operator. The timetable showed the difference and the service had been running to timetable.

Mr Smith said Halesowen Bus Station was part of the public highway. CENTRO and Dudley Borough Council had reached agreement for CENTRO to lease the bus station, and they would take over its management. The short-term aim would be to regularise lay overs and stands with the long-term aim of redesigning the bus station to bring it up to full standard. Operations manager Philip Mitchell said a substantial review of the company's registrations had taken place and a number of changes had been made to solve the problems. An additional inspector had been recruited bringing the total to five. Since March all the vehicles had been equipped with electronic ticket machines which helped the company to monitor the drivers. The number of reports they got from the inspectors was now minimal, which indicated the drivers were doing what they were supposed to be. There had been a total of 21 disciplinary hearings since the beginning of April, but the number per month had dropped from 10 in April to one in July.

All the vehicles had destination blinds. However, there were two types and on occasions buses were not always used on the services they were originally allocated to when a defective vehicle had to be replaced. They now had a number of blinds delivered showing all the services operated by the company, which would enable them to use any bus on any service. On one occasion the blind itself had become defective. There were five instances which were down to driver error and the drivers concerned had been spoken to.

Mr Mitchell said that 30 out of 85 vehicles would have the new destination blinds. Many drivers had the same vehicle working on the same service every day. The vehicles always showed the service number. Mr Mitchell said the maintenance situation was now such that there were fewer breakdowns and vehicles becoming defective, so there was less incidence of vehicle changeover. The missing bus on the West Bromwich service had been lost due to a breakdown. The passenger who was left behind was known to the driver as a disabled person who signalled every bus but could only board lowfloored vehicles. They had engaged the services of a 'mystery passenger', whose identity only he and the managing director knew, to monitor drivers and inspectors.

Managing director Jeffrey Howle said that, following the last public inquiry, he had written to all employees and there had been staff meetings to emphasise the importance of achieving a satisfactory operation. The improved supervision was producing commercial results. They had found the exercise to be very cost effective and they were providing a higher standard of service than they were six months ago. The repainting schedule had been speeded up and there was only one white vehicle still to be done.

Mr Seymour said the company was to be commended on the constructive and continuing efforts made to improve standards of operation, and he was gratified to hear the process was cost effective. Nobody, not even operators, benefited from a poor standard of service. He was satisfied there had been significant improvements and he would do no more than to issue a formal warning.

The deputy commissioner warned, however, it was no time to be complacent, as that was the surest way to decline, and he pointed out there was still room for improvement. Indicating he would ask for further monitoring to be carried out in six months, Mr Seymour said that, if standards had not declined, no further action would be taken.

Authorisation cut from seven vehicles to two

LICENSING

VG JARVIS COACHES O-licence authorisation was cut from seven vehicles to two at a Cardiff disciplinary inquiry. Brian and Marie Jenkins, trading as VG Jarvis Coaches, of Hirwaun Road, Rhydywaun, Aberdare, Mid Glamorgan, had been called before South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh following the issue of a number of prohibition notices and a failure to produce inspection records and tachograph charts.

For the firm, Michael Carless said the parking problems they had experienced were now in the past. They had now taken over the premises of a former operator, Lewis Coaches. However, the yard had been full of scrap, with 300 used tyres and 50 oil drums having to be cleared.

There had also been problems over vandalism, but the firm was now in a strong position to go forward. The records had gone missing following a break-in. The fleet had been reduced to three vehicles, one of which was for sale.

He hoped the action taken would restore the firm's credibility. They wanted to undertake contracts with Social Services and the intention was to replace the buses with specialised vehicles. Mr Jenkins agreed there had been a lapse in trying to get the garage up and running and he expressed the hope he could make it a better operating centre.

He admitted he'd had difficulties over drivers completing daily nil defect report sheets but said he now had two responsible drivers. Regarding two prohibition notices which had been endorsed as showing significant maintenance failures, Mr Jenkins said one related to a load-sensing valve on a vehicle that was not being used and the other related to brake failure on a vehicle being driven by an inexperienced driver.

Cutting the authorisation, Mr Pugh said there had been weak management and it was blatantly clear Mr Jenkins had not been tough enough. As far as the missing tachograph records and other paperwork were concerned, it did not wash with him that thieves in Wales were interested in such things.

Can I appeal against the granting of this O-licence?

Q **An individual, who had previously been the dominant partner in a coach business that crashed, has just been granted an O-licence. His previous business collapsed with thousands of pounds owing to hotels and other operators and, I believe, there had been convictions for using untaxed vehicles. It is an affront to respectable operators that someone like this can be granted a licence. Is it possible to appeal against him having this licence?**
(Name & Address withheld)

A No, you cannot appeal. Only the applicant and the statutory objectors have a right of appeal against the decision of a traffic commissioner in relation to PSV O-licence matters. For a reason which I can never understand, the statutory objectors for PSV applications are limited to the police and local authorities.

Trades unions and trade associations have the right to object (and thus appeal) against the grant of goods vehicle O-licences - and they frequently do so. It amazes me that our industry has never sought parallel rights of objection and appeal. I understand that traffic commissioners generally would welcome it - for it would give them a broader picture of applicants.

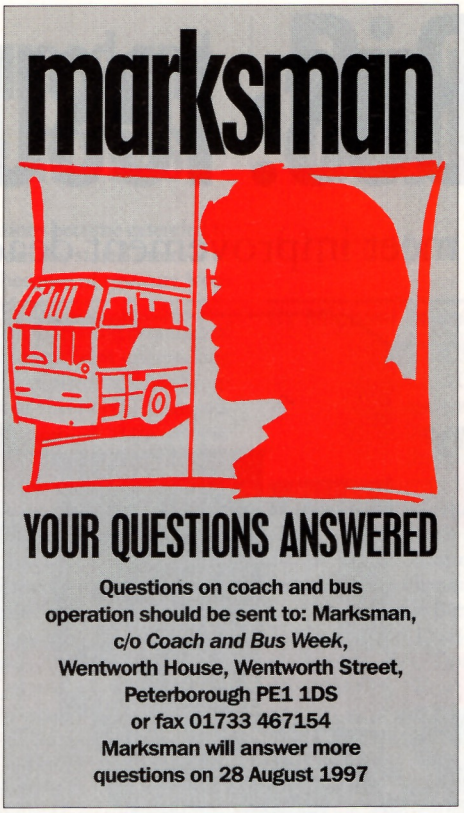
All you can do now, if circumstances warrant it, is be watchful for any warning signs of history repeating itself and report the facts to the Traffic Area Office. Note I did say facts. It is evidence, with dates, times, names, vehicle registration numbers, etc, that are necessary. Suspicion and hearsay will not do.

While I understand your feelings, you may need to accept that, unless the person concerned was absolutely responsible for what took place in relation to a partnership (and even more so had it been a limited company), what happened to the partnership may not have damaged his personal repute sufficiently to warrant refusal of a licence. The Traffic Area could well be aware of what had occurred in the past and be keeping a close watch on the way business is conducted under this new licence.

Although it is of little application in relation to your question, it may be helpful to you and other readers for me to round the point out that, although operators and associations of operators do not have the power to make a statutory objection to a PSV licence application, the law (Public Passenger Vehicle Act 1981, Schedule 3, as amended by S.I 1990 Numbers 1851 & 2641) does say that, in determining whether an individual or a company is of good repute, the traffic commissioner "shall have regard to all the relevant evidence" including "such other information as the commissioner may have as to previous conduct, in whatever capacity, in relation to the operation of vehicles of any description in the course of a business."

The commissioner does, therefore, have discretion to hear evidence from anyone in these circumstances.

Operators who are prepared to attend a public inquiry, to give evidence regarding the repute of an O-licence applicant, and be subject to cross examination by the applicant or any person representing him, might well find it worthwhile advising the Traffic Area Office of the information known about the applicant and formally seeking the traffic commissioner's agreement to attend as a witness. Again, I emphasise that hard evidence is needed - not just rumour and supposition.



Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154
Marksman will answer more questions on 28 August 1997

Ferry services and coach drivers' daily rest periods?

Q **We use the evening ferry services from Portsmouth to the Continent. The sailing time is about seven hours and, with waiting time, an interrupted rest of nine hours is normally possible. I know it is possible to interrupt a rest period for up to one hour for embarkation or disembarkation. My questions are:**
1) Does the amount of interrupted time have to be added to the rest?
2) The daily rest has to be increased by two hours, ie, to an impractical 11 hours. On these occasions are we able to exercise our option and reduce it back down to nine hours and compensate the two hours by the end of the next week?
PFC, South Wales

A Under EU regulation 3820/85 rest is defined as: "An uninterrupted period of at least one hour during which the driver may freely dispose of his time." Consequently, the answer to your first question is that it is only the non-working periods that count as rest - not the time from start to finish including the interruption.

The normal minimum daily rest is 11 hours and the ability to reduce it to nine hours is a concession given by Article 8(1) of 3820/85. The ability to interrupt (once only) for a maximum of an hour on embarkation or disembarkation is contained in Article 9 and the words which, I believe, make your second point an impossibility, are these: "The daily rest period, interrupted in this way, shall be increased by two hours."

I do not believe this is open to any other construction other than the minimum daily rest is nine hours and that (or whatever longer period is being allocated) has to be increased by two hours if working under Article 9.

Where a crossing provides an uninterrupted rest of eight hours, you are probably better off to forget about Article 9 and utilise the simple split rest provisions. If rest time on the crossing was eight hours, you would need another four hours earlier in the working day to give split daily rest. The four hours (in this example) can be taken in two parts as long as both are longer than one hour. One of them could be on the dockside. Rest interrupted using Article 9 requires the driver to have access to a bunk or couchette. No such provision applies to split daily rest (other than the availability of a bunk if rest is taken on a stationary coach).

What's your view on these Government proposals?

Q **Do you have a view on the Government's proposals for interest to be payable on overdue accounts?**
CM, Surrey

A Firstly, they are not yet proposals: the issue is under consultation and if you have views you should let them be known to the DTI (from whom a consultative paper can be obtained - phone 0171 215 0267). My initial reaction is that the 'benefit' (if it is one) should not only apply to 'small firms' (whatever they are). In my opinion any statutory provision should apply to all commercial transactions, otherwise there is a risk of small businesses being discriminated against when contracts are awarded.

I cannot actually see the necessity for legislation. It is open to any business, large or small, to decide the terms on which it is prepared to transact business - including penalty charges to deter late payment. Small businesses are no more likely to apply pressure, including court action, to collect any statutory penalty than they have been to use the trading powers long available to them.

Why these discrepancies regarding trailer towing?

Q **Can you clarify the position on us fitting a towbar to a 12-metre Plaxton 3500 Scania 112 and the maximum trailer length and weight? The local Vehicle Inspectorate and CPT seem to be in total disagreement. The VI says "No" and CPT says "Yes" as long as the overall length does not exceed 18 metres.**
CH, Lancs

A I could not give a categorical answer without a lot more information. As you will see from some material I have sent to you, trailers have to meet standards set out in at least three EU Directives (79/489, 85/647 and 88/194) - most of which are about brake spec and efficiency of the trailer and the towing vehicle. Additionally they have to comply with our Construction & Use Regulations (S.I. 1986 No 1078), notably regulations 75, 76 & 87. Your particular proposals may well fall foul of something within this legal framework and thus result in the "No" from VI.

Having said that, in big broad terms, the CPT advice is correct. A PSV can tow a trailer if:

- It does not obstruct any exit
- The addition of the towbar does not increase the length of the towing vehicle above 12 metres
- Total outfit length is not more than 18 metres.

The maximum permitted laden weight of a trailer fitted with over-run brakes and manufactured after 27 February 1977 is 3,560 kg. A trailer manufactured after 1 October 1982 must either have a device which will automatically stop the trailer if it becomes detached, or a secondary coupling.

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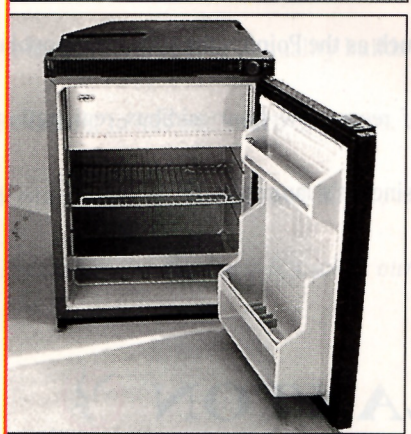

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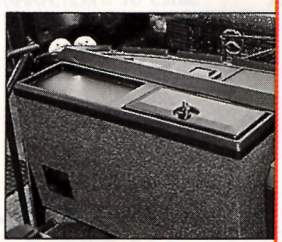

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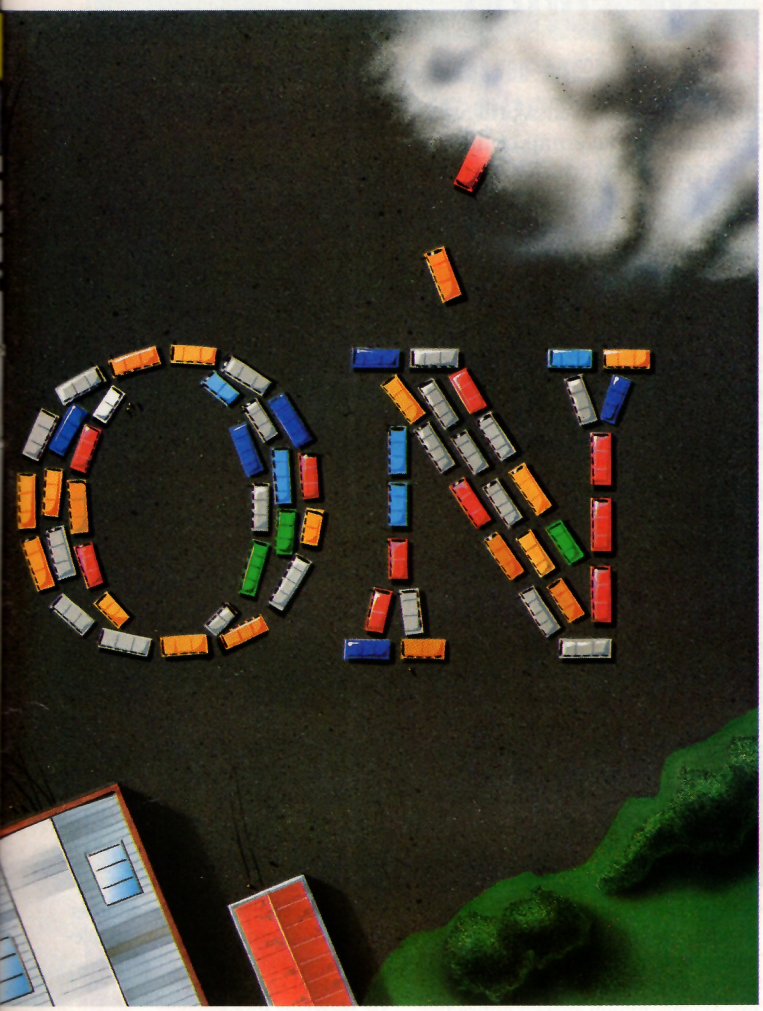

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DIARY

Latest in the name game...

CBW can exclusively reveal Plaxton's latest move in the dispute with East Lancs over the use of the Premyer name - the Plaxton East Lancashire. The renaming of the long-established Supreme body appears to have slipped out without any publicity but was spotted in Fleetwood.

The bold lettering leaves no doubt as to the body's identity and avoids the use of those expensive badges that simply become collectors' items.

On a serious note, the Supreme-bodied Leopard is in the fleet of East Lancashire Motor Services of Blackburn. Now, are there any operators out there named Plaxton who operate East Lancs-bodied buses... ?

What's in a name? Is this really the Plaxton East Lancs?

COACH AND BUS WEEK ENDING...

10 YEARS AGO

- "The French Ministry of Transport seems to be indulging in a campaign directed largely at British coaches, whereby the slightest misdemeanours incur an on-the-spot fine of Ffr900," said Pat Holmes, coach manager of Townsend Thoresen.

- The first Volvo B10M articulated coaches to go into service in the UK have started work for British Caledonian Airways at Gatwick Airport. The new Van Hool-bodied bendi-buses are about 18 metres long and can carry a maximum of 140 passengers.

- Frontsource, owners of the eight ex-NBC engineering companies since 6 March have sold 60 per cent of Birmingham-based Carlyle Works to its management. The new company will be known as the Carlyle Group Ltd.

- Thamesdown Transport, the bus operator owned by Swindon local authority, has introduced its first midibus on local services and returned to using conductors.

15 YEARS AGO

- THE three-star Marine and Curlinghall Hotel in Largs is promoting Virility Breaks as part of the resort's Viking Festival, 8-11 September 1982. Male guests will be set chauvinist challenges during a three-day holiday which is designed to evoke the true Norse spirit.

- Findings in the report by consultants Touche Ross into National Bus Company's capital debts are a contribution to the discussion of the impact of the debt on the group's operating outlook but, regrettably, the limited recommendations would neither equitably nor significantly ease the burdens uniquely borne by passengers using NBC services, says National Bus Company.

- David Howell, secretary of state for transport, says he will shortly be laying draft regulations before Parliament containing the Government's proposals for implementing an EEC Directive on the exchange of driving licences within the community. Although the other main requirement is for national licences in a community-style format this will not be introduced until 1 January 1986 and the possible inclusion of a photograph has been rejected as "incompatible with our concept of lifetime licensing."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, EMAP Automotive Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154 e-mail: FrankF@automotive.emap.co.uk

Is dress code next in line?

I am curious to know why A.E. Foden (*CBW*, 5 July) thinks people would only want to bring old and dirty bikes on to his buses.

My experience of taking bikes on buses is limited, but I have extensive experience of taking bikes on trains. Bikes carried there are certainly not all old and dirty.

Bikes, like shoes, luggage, buses and cars, pick up dust during travel, and some may be old - but so what? Since when has being old been a crime? Many bicycles will be modified over the years to fit the owner's requirements (any regular cyclist will know how strange someone else's machine feels) - and many cyclists appreciate their machines as good friends and companions, to be looked after and not discarded lightly. Furthermore, no-one who cares about their bike would want it to be rattling and banging about because of poor provision for cycle carriage in any vehicle.

Do A. E. Foden's prejudices perhaps say something about the sort of people whom he thinks choose to travel by bus?

And what next - perhaps A. E. Foden would like to introduce a dress code to keep out dirty old passengers?

ROSEMARY SHARPLES
Old Trafford
Manchester

Letter of the Week

Was there gap in judge's knowledge?

Your report of a Manchester Crown Court judge deciding that two feet is the acceptable step-to-kerb distance for bus boarding suggests the judge concerned is unfamiliar with the Regulations governing driver conduct.

The Public Service Vehicles (Conduct of Drivers etc) Regulations 1990 require drivers to stop as closely as possible to the left or nearside when picking up or setting down passengers at the roadside.

The judge's statement also suggests he is unfamiliar with bus travel. Manchester has the biggest lowfloor bus fleet outside London and, although these buses are well used by parents with baby buggies and passengers in wheelchairs, they also carry many more elderly passengers with restricted mobility.

All these passengers are disadvantaged if the bus does not get close to the kerb. Indeed, failure to do so negates the benefit of the low floor.

Passengers on high-floor vehicles are at an even greater disadvantage if the bus fails to pull into the kerb. If the bus is close to the kerb not only is there less horizontal gap for passengers to negotiate but the vertical distance is reduced by four or five inches if passengers can board from the pavement instead of the road. It is unfortunate that nobody saw fit to inform the judge that large numbers of bus users are people well past retirement age who would have problems stepping over a two-foot gap on the level, never mind stepping up to a bus entrance nearly a foot above the ground.

WILLIAM TYSON
Director of planning and promotion
Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive
Manchester

Outcome not as reported

With regard to your report (*CBW*, 19 July), I deplore the typically sensationalised format of reporting to which unfortunately, we have all become accustomed in recent times. The photograph of our Bova coach together with the report beneath completely misrepresented the outcome of the inquiry to which it referred.

Had your reporter taken the trouble to attend the hearing, or even obtain a transcript of the proceedings, he would have discovered that this company has an MOT pass rate of better than 95 per cent over the last 12-month period, compared with the national average of only 77%. He would also have discovered that the traffic commissioner, in his summing up, stated he considered the fleet to be in good condition and well maintained, but that a penalty had to be imposed for deficiencies in the keeping of records. Hence the minimum 'fine' of one vehicle disc suspended for one month.

I must, however, congratulate you on the quality of the photograph, which would have done us more justice positioned on the page featuring the livery competition.

JOE SIMMONS
Managing director
W.J. Simmons (Coaches) Ltd
Grantham
Lincs

■ *The report was a factual statement of the result of the public inquiry based on information supplied to the traffic area office - Ed.*

Give school work to Pat?

I see that our dear old friend Pat Harris has now jumped on another band wagon, ie, KDA (to keep drivers awake) on their daily trips.

When is this lady going to stop hassling us coach operators? How about if we have a whip-round and buy her a brand new coach? Let her find out the rules and regulations that we have to wade through. Now I know she must read through this excellent magazine so, Pat, would you please start yet another group called CBOC (Children Behave on Coaches).

On one coach alone we have had 18 seatbelts vandalised, the culprits being young grammar school girls, so who is going to replace the seat belts month after month?

One day, while waiting for one of my coaches to pull away, I noticed a young lady picking away with her fingers at the seatbelt and I spoke to a mother standing next to me and said to her: "Look at that child having a pick at that seatbelt." She replied, saying that was her daughter and I should see the state of her settee indoors.

So, dear fellow operators, perhaps we should all give our school contracts to Pat Harris and let her get on with it.

STAN BACON
AC Travel
Northfleet
Kent

Does anyone have a copy?

In 1982 Elizabeth Gundrey, the author of *England By Bus*, wrote a sequel entitled *The Good Coach Guide*, describing journeys made on National Express services during the early 1980s.

Although I managed to obtain a copy, the book is coming apart and my efforts to obtain a replacement copy have been unsuccessful. If anyone has a copy they no longer want, could they please let me know? I am willing to reimburse P&P costs - alternatively, I can exchange it for a spare copy of *England By Bus*.

I can be contacted at the address below, or alternatively you can telephone me on 01252 512877.

BRIAN HOLMES
59 Mytchett Road
Mytchett
Camberley
Surrey

Thanks for the latest model

Thanks for the latest bus for my collection and for the editorial correction. I await the responses from disabled pressure groups.

TIM JENNINGS
Director
Somerbus
Poulton
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Letter of the Week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

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Contestant fifty: TM Travel of Chesterfield, Derbyshire

Contestant fifty one: Ebdons Coaches Ltd of Sidcup, Kent

Contestant fifty two: Truemans Travel of Camberley, Surrey

Entries beat

AN unprecedented level of entry means this year's Individual Livery Award will beat all records. This week marks the half way point in the competition with the first 50 entries having been published so far.

The Award attracted immediate attention when operators were invited to submit photographs which would subsequently be judged by the readers of this magazine.

There is no doubt the search for the best coach colour scheme in the UK and Eire has attracted the imagination of the industry with the volume of entries accelerating as the 31 July deadline approached. All operators were invited to enter using a single vehicle from their fleet and they have been quick to grab the opportunities which flow from the high-profile competition.

The winner will receive the trophy at the Coach Industry Awards gala dinner, following the democratic vote which will be strictly limited to registered subscribers of *Coach and Bus Week*. This award is just one of 24

Contestant fifty three: Paul S Winson of Loughborough, Leicestershire

Contestant fifty four: Ron W Dew & Son Ltd of Somersham, Cambs

Contestant fifty five: Castleways (Winchcombe) Ltd, Gloucestershire

Contestant fifty six: Harris Coaches of Grays, Essex

Contestant fifty: Beavis Holidays of Bussage, Gloucestershire

Contestant fifty eight: Hodge Coaches (Sandhurst), Berkshire

all records

COACH AND BUS WEEK COACH INDUSTRY AWARDS 1997/8 IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

Awards that form part of *CBW*'s celebration of coaching excellence at the Metropole Hotel near NEC when the Coach Industry Awards takes place on Friday 23 January 1998.

Meanwhile, we continue to deal with each entry strictly on a first-come-first served basis. All operators are given a number which is displayed on their photograph as it appears in the magazine and the same identification will be used on the voting form which will be published in September.

Full details of the Awards night together with a booking form will be supplied in *CBW* as the preparations for the event accelerate into a higher gear next month. As a reader of this magazine you will be able to judge the quality of those entries for yourself when the competition draws to a close next month.

Contestant fifty nine: Bassetts Coachways of Tittensor, Staffordshire

Contestant sixty: Wharfedale Team Ltd of Guiseley, Leeds

Contestant sixty one: Maynes Coaches of Buckie, Scotland

Contestant sixty two: Jackson's Coaches of Blackpool, Lancashire

Contestant sixty three: Travel Sure, of Seahouses, Northumberland

Dan the man...

BUILT upon a motto of 'don't turn anything away' Dan Brown's minibus empire has mushroomed from a speculative part-time enterprise into a business that turns over £700,000 and gives its owner a lifestyle he could only dream about when going 'on the buses' was his first serious job after leaving school.

Having been brought up in London's East End there could be no illusions that life wasn't going to be tough if he wanted to rise above the also-rans, yet Mr Brown admits school was at best an irrelevance that made him restless for something meaningful in life.

He left at the first opportunity but in truth had been skiving off more often than not. His first experiences as a wage earner were in a string of dead-end jobs but at 18, he was wooed by London Transport's recruitment drive for conductors. He soon learned that the shifts were short and overtime plentiful and before he had time to be restless had taken the next step on the bus industry career structure, taking the wheel of RTs and RMs on the number 8 or number 10 routes.

But it wasn't to last. Some moonlighting with local coach companies gave him a taste of the world where contracts could be won and money made. It was 1972 when the inevitable happened. He tendered for some business, put £250 towards a second-hand Ford Transit and Dans Mini-Buses of north east London was born. He says he got £12 for his first private-hire job - and that was a 0530 hrs pick up. However, that rate had to be compared with £36 average weekly earnings on LT.

The full-time job couldn't last as he put in more bids. With each success came more vehicles and he's followed the same principal ever since. If the work is there - and the price is right - go for it. That's his straightforward explanation for the growth of the business.

Is it not strange that someone with big-bus experience should specialise at the mini end of the PSV market? Not when viewed through the columns of Mr Brown's accounts, which show day rates for 29 seaters which would make the owners of full-size coaches green. Special hires such as the Derby can fetch over £500 but the average rate last year was around £280-£350.

No wonder he is totally committed to the minicoach market. Not only is the capital cost of a new vehicle a fraction of that for a 53 seater but the running costs are also comparatively low - just £300 for a replacement windscreen or a new clutch.

There's a strong preference for Ford Transits but where larger capacity is needed Mercedes-Benz is the only other vehicle type in Dan's fleet. Many are bought for bread-and-butter local authority contracts manned by self-employed drivers. Some have wheelchair lifts and there's a strong emphasis on buying new - particularly for the private-hire vehicles which inspired the change of name to Dans Luxury Travel five years ago.

Indeed, he tried an MAN 11.180 with toilet and TV in the belief that the rear-engined design based on big-coach technology would be better suited to his growing base of up-market corporate clients. But it didn't work out. Mr Brown says it was less reliable and more costly to keep on the road than the vehicles he had used to provide the foundation for his business.

Hence the policy to keep within the 29-seat threshold using M-B 814s. Flagships are a pair of recently refurbished Optare StarRiders which can be fitted with tables and the most recent purchases are two Autobus Classique Nouvelles which have heater boxes rather than perimeter radiators. And unlike the StarRiders they do not have a flat floor so consequently - and to Mr Brown's annoyance - cannot be equipped with tables without resorting to downseating.

Like every other vehicle in the Dans' fleet, the 814s have to earn their keep. It all stems from that unwritten motto - don't turn anything away. There has to be work before an additional vehicle is bought and once in the fleet the policy is one of maximum utilisation.

Mr Brown thinks nothing of pulling a coach back into London while on layover up to 100 miles away. His reasoning is that it's cheaper to cover the dead mileage rather than pay another driver and need the use of another coach. Transits used on 190-day school contracts double-up as a self-drive fleet, providing useful additional revenue.

"We never have a day when it's quiet and we have nothing to do," said Mr Brown and there was adequate evidence to support this statement during a recent visit to his garage close to the southern end of the M11 in South Woodford. The phone was ringing constantly but there was only a handful of vehicles to be seen - and these were in the workshops for routine service. A delivery of the latest edition of *Yellow Pages* gave Mr Brown the opportunity to show a new prominent half-page advert.

Proactive selling is on-going but expansion by opportunity has inevitably led to a number of landmarks when a sudden increase in demand brought a big increase in the fleet and providing minibuses for the Metropolitan Police has been responsible for most of them. Riots in Tottenham and Brixton were examples where Transits were put on hire to the police - as was the newspaper dispute at Wapping. For five years Dans had the Brixton Prison contract, providing the incentive to move from the sub 16-seater sector to larger vehicles.

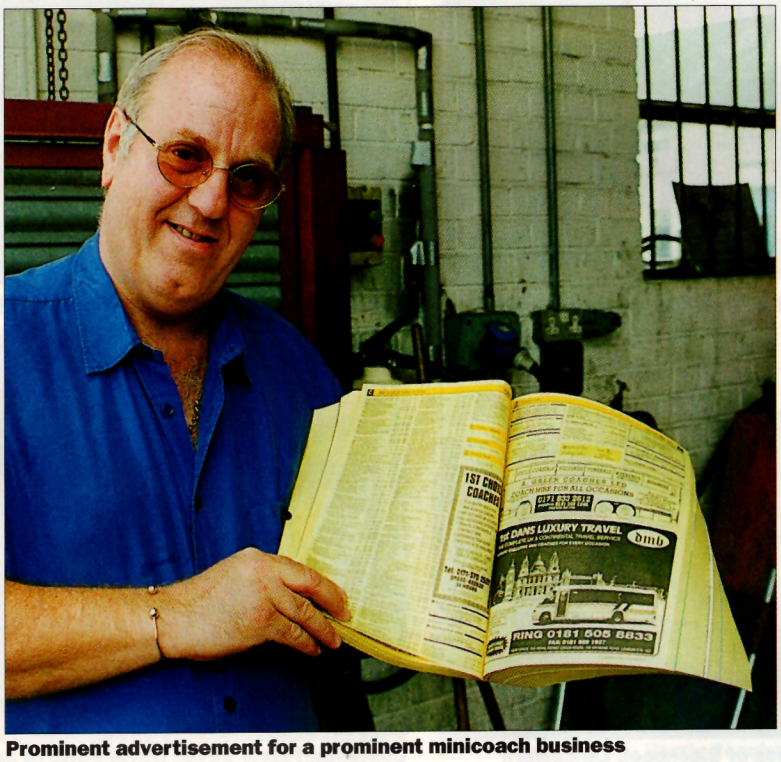
Throughout most of this expansion period Dans Mini-Buses was based at the historic Coach House in Epping Forest. However, the fleet outgrew the premises and a reluctant search for alternative accommodation started two years ago.

Nevertheless, Mr Brown could not resist transferring the very appealing 'Royal Forest Coach House' address to the leased garage he found in Maybank Road, South Woodford.

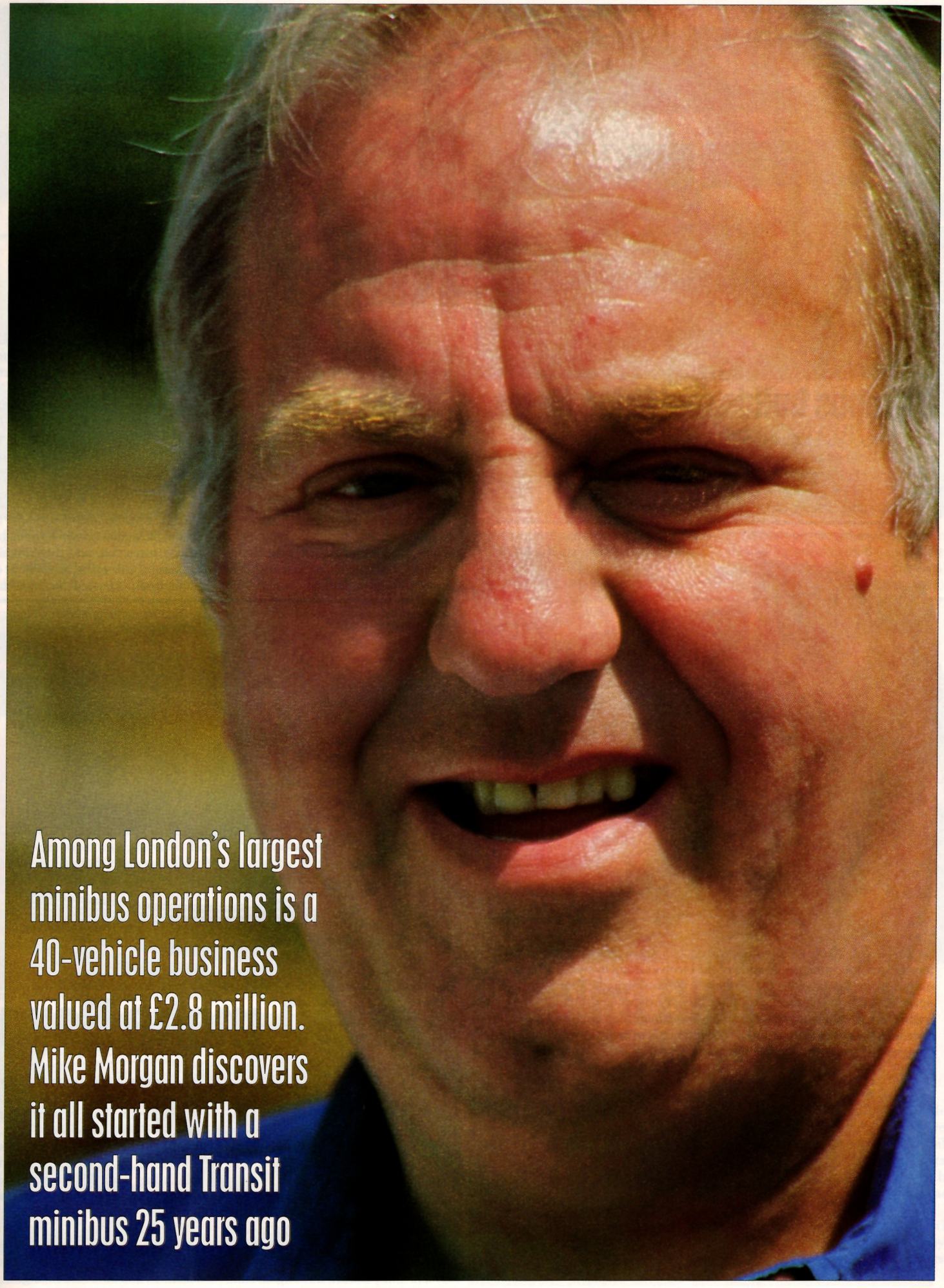
With typical energy he swiftly adapted the down-at-heel industrial units, giving them the Dans identity in double-quick time.

Non-stop working has brought its consolations. Mr Brown's office door proudly carries the message 'managing director' on a brass plate and this sanctuary from the hive of activity outside is fitted out with deep-pile carpet and sumptuous leather upholstery. His walls are covered in some amazing framed pictures built up from parts from old clocks and watches. These unusual examples of East End artwork sum up the man who has driven forward this minibus operation. From an unlikely set of circumstances and starting with second-hand components he has built up an intricate business in which its founder can take great pride.

This analogy suggests that the job is complete. So is Mr Brown ready for new challenges after 25 years at the helm? His reply is as uncompromising as the demands he makes of his staff and his vehicles. Should the right offer be on the table he would be quick to grab the opportunity to spend more time in Florida - though it is doubtful that this answer implies retirement. Dans Luxury Hire is very much a reflection of Dan the man. It's a non-stop business that's refused to stand still.



Prominent advertisement for a prominent minicoach business



Among London's largest minibus operations is a 40-vehicle business valued at £2.8 million. Mike Morgan discovers it all started with a second-hand Transit minibus 25 years ago

IN BRIEF

Olympus builds matching Mercs

OLYMPUS COACHCRAFT, the Manchester-based minibus conversion specialist, has built a pair of matching Mercedes-Benz vehicles for the Garden Park Hotel, which is part of the Redrow Group of Builders. One Sprinter 16 seater (above) and one Vito seven-seater were supplied via the Garden Park's local Mercedes-Benz deal, Dingle Garages Ltd of Llandudno Junction.

DAF lowfloors are high-fliers

A BATCH of 19 lowfloor DAF Bus SB220 has been ordered through dealer Hughes DAF for use on a Heathrow Airport contract won by Speedlink. The bodywork is to Northern Counties Paladin design but these vehicles will be Plaxton-badged, following the decision of the Henlys Group to switch all single-deck output from Wigan to the Plaxton plant in Scarborough. Framework on the Speedlink vehicles has been completed by Northern Counties (above) before transfer by low-loader across the Pennines where they are being fitted out to Speedlink's requirements (below). The interior is to be fitted with luggage racks along the offside of the lowfloor area.

Setras most luxurious on NatEx work

EVOBUS

NATIONAL EXPRESS passengers travelling between South Wales, Liverpool and London will be treated to the ride from seven new Evobus Setras. Bebbs' seven Setra 250s can claim to be the most luxurious coaches on NatEx diagrams, offering air conditioning, 44 seats, floor-level toilet, and servery, plus the usual Setra refinements of top-quality seats with seatback tables.

The coaches join 11 others on Bebbs' National Express work, but have been given its high-profile 509 Cardiff-London and 550 London-Liverpool routes. And it's all in the name of quality, says Bebbs' sales director David Newman.

"It's the same mentality which runs the rest of the Bebbs fleet," said Mr Newman. "It's the Bebbs ethic to provide a top-quality service in everything we do. If you get that right, you will always win out in the end."

Mr Newman said the Setras became feasible because of the way the deal with Lincoln-based Evobus had been constructed, and the company felt it was the best deal available at decision time. He said the legendary

First 10-metre Bova

MOSELEY (PCV)

THE first 10-metre Bova Futura FHD 10.340 in the country was delivered to Flights Coach Travel of Birmingham in time to qualify for one of the first R-reg plates on 1 August.

Flights chairman Ken Flight said the 34 seater had been specially laid out and would be used on the company's touring programme and private hire.

The baby Futura has Flights standard paint scheme, being identical to the other 16 Bovas in the fleet, which Mr Flight says "have worked superbly well."

Moseley (PCV) of South Elmsall, Pontefract, supplied the new coach, which has Bova B10 reclining seats and offside rear floor-mounted chemical toilet.

The rear window is deleted, while other special fittings include colour monitor, aircraft-style lockers fitted to hatracks, and air-conditioning.

quality ensured good residuals and reliability.

"We can't ignore the possibility that an increase in demand might lead to an extra diagram. We have already built the two routes from five coaches to seven a day.

It is not the first time Bebbs has run Setras on NatEx duties, having run Tornados in the mid-80s. They were ousted when NatEx announced the Expressliner standard coach.

● Bebbs' new Setras were among the first R-reg coaches on the road when they went into service in the small hours of 1 August (*CBW*, 9 August).

Browns' Beavers are based on Merc 814D

KIRKBY

AMONG the R-registered coaches entering service on 1 August is a new 33-seat Plaxton Beaver for Browns Coaches of South Kirkby, near Pontefract. It is based on a Mercedes-Benz 814D chassis and replaces an older 25 seater in the Browns Coaches fleet.

"This will be our sixth Beaver," said general manager Adrian Griffith.

"It's a coach that suits our operation well, offering a high standard of comfort and good value for money. The latest version with the improved interior and belts on all seats is easily the best yet." Continuity of production - the Beaver was launched 10 years ago - ensures good parts availability and helps residual values.

Browns Coaches celebrates 21 years of business in 1997, having been established in 1976, and runs 10 coaches. The new Beaver will be used on private hires - mainly in the UK, although Browns does occasionally send Beavers on trips to mainland Europe.

"One of the plus points of buying a Mercedes is that you have no worries about finding service support wherever you send it," said Mr Griffith.

Capital B9Ms have side-mounted rads

PLAXTON

CAPITAL COACHES, the Heathrow-based company which recently merged with Whytes Airport Services, a sister company with the National Parking Corporation group, is on the verge of taking delivery of four unusual 10-metre coaches from the Plaxton plant in Scarborough, North Yorkshire.

Based on a close relative of the Volvo's B10M chassis, the Capital vehicles are the first B9Ms to be built with side-mounted radiator - Capital being no stranger to the type which, like previous-generation B10Ms, had front-mounted radiator.

The 41 seaters will be put to work at Capital's redeveloped West Drayton site where the combined business trades as Capital Logistics.

In the last in our series lifting the veil on European Union proposals that affect the coach and bus industry, Mike Morgan examines the ever tighter limits on exhaust emissions

Fresh air does not come for free

EMISSIONS REGULATIONS may appear to be a politically correct expedient in response to mounting public pressure but they are not only here to stay but will inevitably get tighter.

For fleet engineers faced with the day-to-day problems of keeping vehicles on the road, or finance directors quizzing the spiralling costs of the new technology there is little consolation in the knowledge that the air we breath is less polluted as a result of the fine-tuning hammered out in meeting rooms in Brussels. Yet the remoteness of the EU decision makers from those who have to work with the results is one reason why the terms Euro 1 and Euro 2 are received with a complete lack of emotion.

However, the concept of mandatory standards is not new. Exhaust emissions introduced for petrol and light duty diesels on 1 January 1993 in practice required the use of three-way autocatalysts on all new petrol-engined cars registered in Europe. This brought European standards to levels comparable with those that were introduced in the UK in the 1980s.

In 1997, a second stage of EU legislation was introduced for all new cars, covering petrol and diesel engines. These standards bring EU legislation into line with UK standards introduced over the period 1994 - 1996.

A third, new stage of legislation has been proposed by the European Commission to set emissions standards for 2000 and beyond. This draft directive also proposes that petrol vehicles with electronically-controlled catalytic converters should be fitted with an on-board diagnostic system that indicates when emissions are not conforming to standard and require further investigation. The German Government has introduced fiscal incentives to encourage early adoption of the 2000 limits. It has recently introduced tax incentives for the retrofitment of existing vehicles with closed-loop TWCs (gasoline) or oxidation catalysts (diesels).

Leaside Buses runs two Routemasters fitted with EC Trap filters from ECS

Two stages of limits came into effect for heavy-duty diesel vehicles in 1992 (Euro 1) and 1996 (Euro 2). A third stage will apply from 2000 (Euro 3), details of which are expected some time this year. A fourth tier has also been proposed for 2005 (Euro 4).

All diesel passenger cars and light commercial vehicles first used before August 1979 are subject to a visual assessment of smoke emissions. For all other diesel vehicles, including heavy-duty vehicles, a metered smoke test is carried out.

Although there is a derogation which has enabled manufacturers to sell a small number of stock vehicles after the 1 October 1996 deadline, Euro 2 exhaust emissions standards apply to all new coaches and buses. However, the next stage, Euro 3, is less than three years away, the details remain a mystery, with manufacturers left to second guess the required standard.

Meanwhile, the UK coach and bus industry is working to convince Government that it has the necessary environmental credentials to guarantee it is in a fit state to support the radical changes which are necessary to defeat the dependency on the private car.

It remains to be seen whether gas power has a role in the search for lower emissions. However, the consensus view as promoted by the Confederation of Passenger Transport is that petrol and diesel will remain the primary fuel source for some time to come.

Older engines can be brought up to the latest standards. Johnson Matthey's novel continuous regenerating trap (CRT) system removes exhaust pollutants. It features a combination of catalyst and filter technology. Another supplier is ECS which has fitted its EC Trap to Leaside Buses.

The Confederation of Passenger Transport says it is worth noting the MIRA quotation: "There is no such thing as a non-polluting energy source." However, the challenge of zero emissions remains and the industry is lobbying for a tax regime designed to benefit public transport, and public transport users alike, as a foundation in this process.

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Ford R1114 Supreme IV. 1979, 53 seats, PP, seat belts.....**£2,500 with MoT**
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01923 859396
for further details
71285/CM

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33 seat Autobus Classique II
Coachbuilt, rack lights, forced air, curtains, power door, radio/cassette/p.a. & seat belts, MoT March '98
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BOVA FUTURA 85, 49 seats, courier, TV/video, coffee machine, toilet, double glazed, tinted windows, P/P, good condition throughout .....**£32,000 + VAT**
BEDFORD YMT SUPREME, 1980, new MoT, recent retrim, good condition throughout .....**£4,000 + VAT**
VOLVO B10M LAG GALAXY, recon engine, 1983, P/P, 49 seats, courier, toilet, TV/video, all white, good condition throughout .....**£18,200 + VAT**
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TOYOTA OPTIMO Mk I

6 cylinder turbo, 19 seats plus courier, seat belts, hot drinks unit, TV/video, new PA/audio system, recon engine, fuel pump, injectors, clutch, exhaust plus various other odds and ends.
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BOVA EUROPA, 1984, 53 recliners + courier, a nice coach, late model fitted with large lockers and Futura type seats, wheel discs, MoT June 1998, **£15,950 ono. Tel: 01902 731768.** 70995/BOV

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93 DAF MB230LT VAN HOOL ALIZEE H. ZF 6 speed splitter gearbox, 49 recliners + courier, retarder, video/monitor, radio /PA /cassette, drinks machine, continental door, refrigerator and centre sunken toilet. **SCANIA BUS AND COACH UK LTD. Tel: 01909 500822.** 67265/DAF

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DENNIS

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SND 488X
LEYLAND ATLANTEAN AN68 AUTO

Northern Counties aluminium construction, 75 seats, lower saloon re-moquetted in dark blue 'Graffiti' style, all lower panels replaced, MoT'd and taxed until April 1998
£7,200 + VAT & Tyres
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F reg, full spec exec, with air con, must sell comes with possible continental work
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LEYLAND

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MAN SR280
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Optare Star Rider Bus
First reg 1989. Stage Carriage Spec.
26 seats, 18 standees, Allison Auto, recent re-trim.
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First reg Aug 1988 (F reg).
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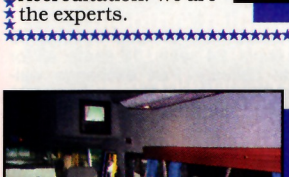

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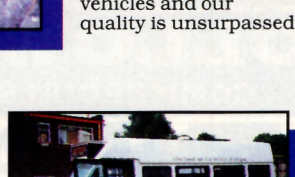

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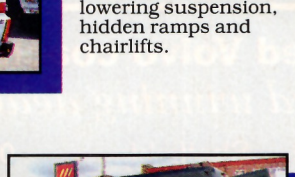

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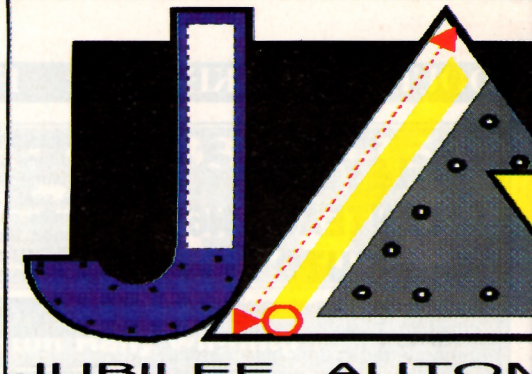

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1991 J Renault S56 Mark II 23-seat coach, Perkins 4-cylinder 3990cc Phaser with 5-speed manual gearbox, high-back moquette seats, power door, Northern Counties coachbuilt bodywork, powerful and practical dual purpose coach offering outstanding value at just £9,995 – READY THIS WEEK.

1990 G Freight Rover 16-seat coach, Optare luxury conversion, very attractive deep/grey/blue interior with matching soft trim, luggage racks, radio/cassette, seat belts, being fully prepared with new rear doors, one only at just £5,995 **ready this week.**

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1989 F Renault S56 Mark II East Lancs 21-seat coach, Perkins 4-cylinder turbo, automatic gearbox, disc brakes retarder, price includes retrim in your choice of moquette as well as our usual preparation package, one only, £6,995

1987 E Renault S56 Mark I 19/21 seat coaches, Alexander AM type alloy bodywork, automatic gearboxes, power doors, beige/orange moquette, saloon heaters, good condition, ideal dual-purpose vehicles, good selection available £4,495

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1987 E Renault S56 Mark I Alexander 25-seater, auto, one only, very clean, £4,295
1987 E Iveco 49.10 Robin Hood 25-seaters, manual or auto, choice of three, £5,295 each
1987/8 D and E MCW MetroRider 23-seaters, choice of 5, £6,995 each
1987 D Iveco 49.10 Robin Hood 19/21 seaters, manual, wide choice, £3,995
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D Reg DODGE, Reeves Burgess body, 20/22 seats, choice of 4, MoTs April/May 98 **£1500-£2000 each**

D Reg DODGE, Alexander body, 25 seats, MoT July 97 **£2950**

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£25,000 + VAT

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Both vehicles in daily use

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Reeve Burgess bodywork, 20 seats + standees, power door, good MoT. Choice of 2.

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Robin Hood body, 20 seats, 6 standees, power door, power steering, painted in white, new MoT, choice of 4

1987/88 MCW METRORIDER
23 seats + standees, Cummins engine, Allison auto, power steering, power door, in white, new MoT, choice of 4.

1987/88 MCW METRORIDER.
23 seats + 7 standees, Cummins engine, Allison auto, power steering, power door, in white.New MoT. Choice of 4.

1986 IVECO 49.10
19 seats with luggage pen, power door, 5-speed manual, new MoT, very clean for year

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Alexander body, 25 seats, good MoT, service spec, very clean

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NEW MERCEDES 814L, coach spec 37 seats air sus, P.door, large boot. Stock **Reduced**

NEW MERCEDES VARIO, extended coach built, luxury coach spec, 33, power swivel door and large boot, forced air, curtains. 5 weeks.

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NEW MERCEDES 711, Turbo, coach built, 29 seats, p/door, large boot, coach spec. Stock.

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NEW MERCEDES VARIO 612, coach spec, 5 cylinder turbo with 24 coach seats, large boot. Stock.

MERC SPRINTER 412 Lux Turbo. 7 days. 16 + lug

MERC SPRINTER 412 16 wheelchair. 7 days.

NEW TRANSIT 14, diesel, 5-spd, s/door.
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NEW DAF, Convoy, 16 PSV, coach spec. Turbo.
NEW DAF, 16 hi roof, Convoy. Turbo. Stock.
NEW VW, 9 seat diesel Taxibus
NEW VW Taxibus, double door. 3 weeks

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LEYLAND DAF CONVOY, turbo and non turbo, 5 chairs, 16 lux. Stock.
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95 MERC 410 16 PSV, tested
95 NOV. MERC 814, 33 coach spec, low mileage
94 MERC 811 p/door, 33 + 12 service bus
94 LEYLAND DAF, 20 seat, service, p/door

94 B10 PREMIER. D/glazed, fridge, coffee, 49 + toilet.

93/91 TALBOT TRI-AXLE, 22 + standees
92 TRANSIT DIESEL 12 PSV, power steering
90 TRANSIT LWB, Petrol, 12 seats.
90 TRANSIT, 15 PSV diesel. Tested.
90 TRANSIT, LWB 12 seat diesel PSV

89 DAF, Algarve exec 11.6, toilet, TV

89 VOLVO VAN HOOL SUPER HIGH. 49, toilet, TV, fridge, coffee machine.

88 DAF BERKHOF SBR 3000, 75 seat exec d/deck, toilet, monitors, good trim, ready to work, tested

89 DUPLE 425 DAF, ZF 7 speed, 55 recliners.
8/89/90 TALBOT, triaxles. 22+ standees.
88 MERC 814 (6 cyl) 29 coach seats
88 TRANSIT 14 diesel, PSV, tested
88 FREIGHT ROVER, 16 diesel, PSV coach
88 TRANSIT, 12 PSV, SWB, Diesel
88 TRANSIT, 12, Petrol
88 TRANSIT, 14 diesel, PSV
87 TRANSIT 16 + standees, new shape, power door.
87 MCW METRORIDER, Perkins, 23 + 6
87 MERC 814. 29 seats, new test.
87 RENAULT DODGE, service bus, 29+ standees

86 B10 ALGARVE retrimmed 49/53 Exec

86 VOLVO B9, 33 coach seats and standees and boot.
86 RENAULT DODGE, 20 service, auto
86 R/DODGE, 25 seat, 5 speed
85 DODGE PERKINS, 39 seat, 5 speed, manual, power door

86 VOLVO B9, Plaxton 33 coach seat + boot and standees. Autobox

85 SETRA, exec, 49, toilet, TV

84 B10 VOLVO BERKHOF, executive, TV, retrimmed.

84 DAF JONCKHEERE, 49 + toilet, retrimmed.

84 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 3500, 49 retrimmed, d/toilet.

83 DODGE R BURGESS, diesel, auto, 17 F dr.

82 VOLVO B10 GOLDLINERS, 53 retrimmed and re-panelled

82 BEDFORD, 35 seat, 8.5 metres.
82 DENNIS, V8 auto Alexander Service Bus

81/82 LEYLAND DOUBLE DECK, 75 seat, East Lancs, SA, tested and tyres

81 BRISTOL VR DECKERS, Gardner, 74 seats. 2 weeks.

80 BEDFORD PLAXTON, 31 recliners, tested
79 FORD 35 seat Duple II, £2,000
78 LEOPARD Duple, express doors
78 LEOPARD EXPRESS Duple, 53
77 BEDFORD YLQ 45 coach, tested
77 FORD 53 DUPLE, £750, tested
75 AEC ZF, retrimmed throughout, 53

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1992 LEYLAND DAF 2.5 diesel, 16 str, turbo, 3 point belts
1992 TOYOTA OPTIMO 18 str
1991 TOYOTA OPTIMO 18 str
1990 SCANIA PLAXTON 3500, 53 str
1990 LEYLAND DAF 16 str
1994 VOLVO B10M Mk4 JONCKHEERE, 55 str
1987 LEYLAND DAF 20 seats, service spec
1980 DAF JONCKHEERE BERMUDA
1980 FORD DUPLE, 53 seater
1980 FORD PLAXTON, 35 seater

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1989 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 reclining seats, curtains, PP, radio, P/A, courier seat, new MoT, choice of 2 .....**£59,500 each**

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1992 MAN JONCKHEERE. 51 seat, reclining, centre toilet and coffee machine, double glazed, curtains and aisle carpet. Choice of 2.

1990 MERC/CHRISMA. 49/53 reclining seats, centre demountable toilet, double glazed side windows, full draw curtains, radio/PA. Choice of 2.

1990 DAF JONCKHEERE. 51 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed, curtains, radio/PA.

1989 DAF JONCKHEERE. 51 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed, curtains, radio/PA.

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1 1994 M reg.	*£195,000*

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1996 N Volvo B10m Jonckheere Deauville 45, 49/53 reclining seats, Exterior White, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Pannier Locker, Rack Locker, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Blinds, Continental Door, Seat Belts, Magazine Nets, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 0150

1995 M Volvo B10M Mk 4 Plaxton Premiere 350, 46 reclining seats, Exterior White, Interior Grey Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Pa, Microphone, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Pannier Locker, Aircraft Locker, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Hot & Cold Water, Tea/Coffee Machine, Servery, Fridge, Drinks Trays on Seats, Magazine Nets, Armrests, Crew Seat, Toilet and Rapide Spec - National Express. Ref: 0887

1995 Private Volvo B10M GL Mk 4 Plaxton Premiere 350, 49/53 seats, Exterior White, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Exhaust Brake, TV, Video, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Pannier Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 0310

1995 M Volvo B10M Mk 4 Plaxton Premiere 320, 53 reclining seats, Exterior Cream & Red, Interior Brown Multi Moquette, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Webasto, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Pannier Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Blinds, Seat Belts, Magazine Nets, Armrests, and Crew Seat. Ref: 0254

1993 L Volvo B10M Van Hool Alizee, 46 reclining seats, Exterior White, Interior Grey Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Microphone, Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Pannier Locker, Aircraft Locker, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Hot & Cold Water, Tea/Coffee Machine, Servery, Fridge, Drinks trays on Seats, Magazine Nets, Armrests, Crew Seat, Rapide Spec and Toilet. Ref: 0965

1993 K Dennis Javelin Premiere 320, 53 reclining seats, Exterior Red and Cream, Interior Brown, Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Telma Retarder, Side Locker, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door and Crew Seat. Ref: 7028

1992 J Volvo B10M Plaxton Excalibur, 49 reclining seats, Exterior Silver and Blue Striped, Grey Striped Moquette, Exhaust Brake, TV, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Pannier Lockers, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Blinds, Continental Door, Tea/Coffee Machine, Fridge, Crew Seat, Crew Compartment and Centre Toilet. Ref: 7053

1991 H Leyland Tiger 290 Plaxton Paramount 3500, 51/53 seats, Exterior White & Red, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers' Fan, Courier Fan, Pannier Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 0288

1990 G DAF SB2300 Jonckheere Deauville 45, 51 reclining seats, Exterior Silver, Red and Black, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Wiring for TV/Video, Radio, Pa, and Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Through Lockers, Rack Lockers, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Continental Door Centre, Tea and Coffee Machine, Crew Seat, Provisional Crew Compartment and Toilet. Ref: 0856

1989 Private Duple 425 Cummins Integral, 53 reclining seats, Exterior White, Interior Brown Coloured Striped Moquette, Telma, TV, Video, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Integral Locker, Aircraft Locker, Rear Window, Tinted WIndows, Peage Window, Double Glazing, Continental Door, Hot Water, Fridge, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 0262

1989 F Mercedes 0303 RHS, 53 reclining seats, Exterior Red and Cream, Interior Red Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Webasto, Tinted Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat and Air Conditioning. Ref: 6973

1987 Private Duple 425 Cummins Integral, 52 reclining seats, Exterior White, Red & Blue, Interior Brown Coloured Striped Moquette, Radio, Driver Operated Door, Integral Lockers, Rack Lockers, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Tea/Coffee Machine, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 0989

1984 Private Mercedes Neoplan Integral Skyliner, 73 seats, Exterior Silver and White, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Continental Door, Hot & Cold Water, Servery, Two Tables, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 0229

1983 A DAF MB DKVL Van Hool Alizee, 49/53 seats, Exterior White, Interior Brown Moquette, Wired for TV/Video, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Drivers' Fan, Side Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Continental Door, Seat Belts, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 0327

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VEHICLE SALES MISCELLANEOUS

1996 BOVA FUTURA FHD
49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, air conditioning, drivers bunk. Interior - grey/multi; Exterior - grey/blue/pink. MOT April 1998.

1995 SCANIA IRIZAR CENTURY
49 reclining seats, air conditioning, toilet, continental door, video & monitor, fridge, water boiler. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - red/orange. MOT May 1998.

1994 BOVA FUTURA FHD
51/55 reclining seats, demountable toilet, continental door, driver's bunk.. Interior -grey; Exterior - white. MOT January 1998.

1993 BOVA FUTURA FHD
49/53 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, water boiler, fridge, wired for video/monitor.. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT January 1998.

1992 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE D/H
48 reclining seats, rear floor mounted toilet, servery with fridge, water boiler. Interior - blue/grey; Exterior - white/yellow/blue. MOT December 1997

1992 TOYOTA OPTIMO
18 reclining seats. Interior -grey/red. MOT December 1997

1989 DAF SB3000 CAETANO ALGARVE
53 reclining seats. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - red/white/blue. MOT June 1998

1988 CHARISMA
49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed side windows, air conditioning. Interior -grey/red; Exterior -white. MOT July 1998

1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 4000
65 reclining seats, toilet, water boiler, wired for video/monitor, TELMA retarder, Interior -autumn tint; Exterior -white. MOT March 1998

1987 BEDFORD YNV DUPLE 320
53 reclining seats, power door. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior -white/red. MOT April 1998

1987 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 3500
53 reclining seats, continental door. Interior -brown, Exterior- white. MOT August 1998

1986 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200
53 reclining seats, low drive position, TELMA. Interior- brown, Exterior-white. MOT February 1998.

1985 NEOPLAN SKYLINER
Mercedes engine, manual gearbox, 75 reclining seats, toilet, fridge, water boiler, TELMA retarder. Interior -red; Exterior -white/red/yellow. MOT Jan 1998

1985 LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE CARRIBEAN
49 reclining seats, rear sunken toilet, continental door. Interior - autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT March 1998.

1985 BEDFORD YNT PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200
53 re-trimmed seats, power operated entrance door. Interior - autumn tint; Exterior - cream/brown. MOT July 1998.

1985 FORD TRANSIT 190 (Diesel)
16 seats, power operated door. Interior - brown; Exterior - white/blue. MOT March 1998.

1984 LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPLE LASER
57 seats, power operated entrance door. Interior - brown; Exterior - green/white. MOT August 1998.

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1984 DAF DKFL CAETANO ALGARVE
50 reclining seats, rear floor level toilet, continental door. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior -white. MOT July 1998.

1983 DAF DKFL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200
51 reclining seats, power operated entrance door, TELMA retarder. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - white.

1983 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P90
58 reclining seats, toilet, water boiler. Interior -brown; Exterior -red/white. MOT July 1998

1983 BOVA EUROPA
53 seats, courier seat, power operated entrance door. Interior -red; Exterior - green/white. MOT October 1997

1980 FORD R1114 DUPLE DOMINANT II
53 seats, power operated entrance door. Interior -grey/brown; Exterior - white/blue. MOT MAY 1998

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◆ 1992 Mercedes/Jonckheere Deauville - 53 recliners, Radio/PA, full air conditioning, fridge, courier seat - new CoF. In good condition throughout. Choice of 3.

◆ 1994 Scania K 113/Van Hool - triaxle, 48/51 recliners, seat belts, courier seat, foot rests, drinks machine, fridge, ABS, Telma, double glazed, air conditioning, TV/Video, 2 monitors, Radio/PA. Excellent throughout.

◆ 1994 Volvo B 10/M Plaxton Premier 3500 - 50 recliners, seat belts, toilet, water boiler, TV/Video, Radio/PA, air conditioning, foot rests, double glazed. Very clean and tidy vehicles. Choice of 4.

◆ 1994 Scania K 113 GRB / Irizar Century - 49 recliners, driver's bunk, drinks machine, rear mounted toilet, fridge, Webasto timer, foot rests, aluminium wheels, automatic gear box - Telma, driver's bunk. Finished in plain white - very clean and tidy throughout.

◆ 1994 Scania K 113 GRB / Irizar Century - as above, but with manual gear box. In excellent condition.

◆ Volvo B 10/M Plaxton 3500 - 53 recliners, Telma, double glazed, re-trimmed, aircraft style lockers, side lockers, Radio/PA. Clean, tidy and worth viewing.

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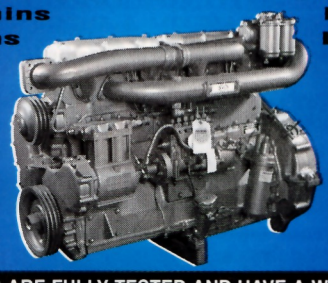

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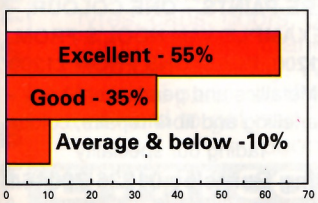

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by 3 September 1997

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Mr A R Bryce
Operations Director
Wilts & Dorset Bus Company Ltd
Towngate House
2-8 Parkstone Road,
POOLE. BH15 2PR

71080/APP

CYNGOR
Sir Ddinbych
Denbighshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
Highways and Transportation

SECTION MANAGER (TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION)
Salary PO 3/4 (£22,692 - £26,325)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATING MANAGER
Salary PO 2/3 (£21,285 - £25,131)

The Directorate's Highways and Transportation Division wishes to appoint the following:

Section Manager (Traffic and Transportation) to be responsible for Transportation Planning, Traffic Safety and Traffic Management.

Public Transport Co-ordinating Manager to be responsible for co-ordinating the county's passenger transport function as well as Road Safety.

Candidates should be professionally qualified with related experience. All posts are subject to Job Evaluation and the salary grade will be in the above range dependent upon experience.

Application form and job description are available from Mrs Dianne Owen, Phase IV, County Hall, Mold CH7 6GU, Tel: 01824 706860. Completed applications to be returned to the address shown on the application form by Monday 1 September 1997.

For further information please contact Clem Randall, Group Manager, Highways Development, on 01824 706879.

71091/APP

CBW CLASSIFIED - IT GETS YOU NOTICED

Appointments & Tenders

Tel: 01733 467144 Fax: 01733 467154

TEMP TECHNICAL ASSISTANT

£11,157-£13,563

Passenger Transport Section, Trowbridge

Required to provide technical support to the Passenger Transport Section in preparing, administering, implementing and reviewing contracts for public and school transport services.

You will also play a key role in the surveying and monitoring of contracts and will be required to assist with running the Wiltshire Bus Line telephone enquiry service.

You should have some experience of work in Passenger Transport, including functions and legislation. It is essential that you possess a BTEC ordinary or equivalent, and an interest in pursuing a career in passenger transport would be an advantage. As on-bus surveys will be an important aspect of the role, you will need your own transport and be willing to work outside normal office hours. It is essential that you are IT literate.

You should be able to demonstrate the ability to work on your own initiative to resolve problems encountered while out of the office, and an organised approach to planning your work and recording information is essential.

A casual car user and subsistence allowances are payable. This position is temporary until 31st March, 1998.

For an informal discussion, please contact Philip Groocock on (01225) 713454.

For an application form and job description please contact the Personnel and Development Team, Environmental Services Department, County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JD, telephone (01225) 713295 (24 hours answerphone service), quoting Reference ENVS97/66. Closing date: 29th August, 1997. Interviews will be held on 8th September, 1997.

Committed to equality of opportunity. All applicants will be selected on their merits. We promote flexible working patterns

Wiltshire COUNTY COUNCIL

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

70985/APP

OPERATIONS MANAGER

Based in the North West, we are a well-established tour operator, specialising in coach holidays. We want to build on our past success and currently have a vacancy in our team for a quality-conscious, motivated professional with the following attributes:

- ***Experience in all aspects of contracting***
- ***Ability to work within a team framework***
- ***A conscientious, dedicated approach***
- ***Ability to communicate and train***
- ***Computer literacy would be an advantage***

The successful applicant would be a key member of our management team and will receive a company car and salary commensurate with experience and ability.

If you are interested in working as part of a happy, forward-looking team, in well-appointed offices with excellent facilities, please send your CV to:

P O BOX 15
BOOTLE
MERSEYSIDE
L20 8QZ

71082/APP

FAX YOUR COPY OVER NOW ON

01733 467154

CONTRACT NOTICE

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

CONTRACT FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES PASSENGERS

RESTRICTED PROCEDURE

1. **Awarding Authority:**

   North Somerset Council
   Contract Services
   Warne Road
   UK - Weston-Super-Mare
   BS23 3ND

   Tel: (01934) 411172
   Facsimile (01934) 415806

   (A Compton, Transport Manager)

2. **Category of Service and Description**

   CPV: 60212100, 60212200.

   Category 2, Transportation of Passengers to and from Educational and Social Services Establishments, CPC reference Nos, 71211 and 71212.

   CPA codes 60.21.21 and 60.21.22.

3. **Delivery to:**

   Primarily within the boundary of North Somerset Council.

4. **a) Reserves for particular profession: No**

5. **Division into Lots:**

   Tenders may be submitted for some or all of the passenger transport routes.

6. **Numbers Invited to Tender:**

   The number of service providers invited to tender will be determined upon consideration of the applications received and will be sufficient to ensure genuine competition.

7. **Variants**

   Variants will not be permitted.

8. **Duration of Contract**

   3 Years 1.4.1998 - 31.3.2001 with an option to extend for a further period of 1 year.

9. **Documents:**

   (a) Available from: As in 1.
   (b) Requests not later than 31.08.97.
   (c) Fee - None.
   (d) Language - English.

10. **Date for the Dispatch of Invitations to Tender:**

    24.10.97

11. **Deposits and Guarantees:**

    None.

12. **Financing and Payments:**

    Payments will be made against invoices submitted monthly to the awarding authority. The invoices will be based upon the value of the work done in the preceding month and will be paid in sterling.

13. **Legal Form in case of Group Bidders:**

    Joint and several liability by all service providers.

14. **Qualifications:**

    The Council will assess and select those invited to tender on the basis of a completed and returned Application/Questionnaire and on the service providers professional conduct, financial standing, track-record, health and safety and equal opportunities policies, quality and environmental management.

    All applications/questionnaires must therefore be supported by appropriate statements for Bankings; the applicants audited and certified accounts for the last 3 financial years, insurance details, details of directors, managers and staff responsible for the provision of the service, details of contracts held by the applicant, details of the applicants health and safety and equal opportunities policies.

15. **Contract Award Criteria:**

    The most economically advantageous tender, details of which will be included in the contract documents.

16. **Other Information:**

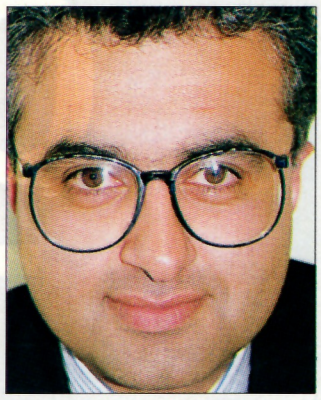
    Transport operators must ensure that all vehicles are licenced in accordance with the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981, and comply at all times with the Public Service Vehicle Regulations. All vehicles with 8 or less passenger seats must be licensed as hackney carriage or private hire vehicles, or otherwise authorised for use by North Somerset Council.

    A copy of the draft conditions of contract may be obtained from the address shown in section 1.

    This notice was dispatched to the Official Journal of the European Communities on 5.8.97

71073/TEN

PEOPLE



New faces at UVG that will shift focus to strategic planning. L-R, Martin Rhodes, Fred Edwards and Kapul Gill

A team that 'will make things happen'

THERE'S a new management team at the helm of coachbuilder, UVG, following the departure of managing director Mike Woodward.

Out goes Mr Woodward, who returns to consultancy firm KPMG and in comes chartered accountant Fred Edwards, who arrives from his post as finance director within the property division of Wicks plc.

For Mr Edwards, 33, the UVG appointment is, in a sense, a return to his roots because, at the onset of his career, there was a link with the coach and bus industry through Leyland, where he was sponsored on an engineering degree course.

He said the challenge for the new team was to shift the focus of management towards strategic planning.

"UVG has been bumbling along rather than motoring. I want to make things happen," he said.

Mr Edwards is joined by former Plaxton man, Kapul Gill, and Martin Rhodes, who moves from Alexander.

Messrs Gill and Rhodes are additional appointments which reflect the strengthening of the UVG team. Mr Gill is sales and engineering director whereas Mr Rhodes is manufacturing director. John Myers becomes head of product development.

Since the former WS Coachbuilders was taken over by UVG welfare minibus production transferred to the Bedwas plant and ambulance output centralised in Yorkshire. In addition a new coach and bus range has been launched as the plant switches from MoD requirements to the PSV market. These include the S320 coach, lowfloor single deck on Dennis Dart, and redesigned mini body for Mercedes-Benz Vario.

Double role for Shelley

SOUTHERN VECTIS has appointed Peter Shelley acting managing director of the group's leisure and retail division. He will combine the role with his current responsibilities as operations director of Solent Blue Line, the Southern Vectis subsidiary.

Mr Shelley plans to develop the Southern Vectis businesses of Vikki Osborne Holidays, TBC Hotline, coach holidays and excursions, and the network of travel offices and post offices on the island.

Well done to Swan

AN UXBRIDGE BUSES driver has received a commendation for the overall professionalism he has demonstrated while working on route U10 from Uxbridge to Ruislip.

Frequent users of the U10 singled out Dave Swan for the special mention through the National Federation of Bus Users' Welcome Aboard Awards. Mr Swan works for Uxbridge Buses, part of CentreWest, a FirstBus subsidiary.

New posts at charity

ARISING from recent reorganisation of the West Midlands Special Needs Transport charity, the company has appointed three area managers: Black Country - Des Rogers; central - Nigel Bostock; Jim Wilson - east.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

CBW Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

Coach and Bus Week **is the news weekly for coach and bus operators.** ***Transit*** **provides vital analysis of, and information on, the UK public transport scene every fortnight. Together they make an unbeatable and invaluable package. All annual subscription rates include delivery by first class post. It is important to fill out all parts of this form. NB: Transit is not available on subscription without** ***Coach and Bus Week.***

TRANSIT

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.
YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title? (Tick one only)

Owner/Director	❑	01
Senior/General	❑	02
Engineering/ Service Manager.	❑	03
Driver	❑	04
Other(please specify)	❑	05

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator...	❑	01
Coach Operator..	❑	02
Coach & Bus Operator.	❑	03
Local Government..	❑	04
Travel/Tourism..	❑	04
Other (please specify)..	❑	05

.....

Name.....

Job Title.....

Company.....

.....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....

Fax.....

Payment (Please circle as appropriate)

Coach and Bus Week

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£49	£88	£125

Eire/Europe 1year £92. Airmail 1 year £124.

Transit (Existing Coach and Bus Week Subscribers)

	1 Year	2 years	3 years
UK	£72	£129	£183

Eire/Europe 1 year £115.00. Airmail 1 year £147.00

Coach & Bus Week and Transit (New Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£121	£217	£308

Eire/Europe 1 year £164 Airmail 1 year £196

By cheque: I enclose a cheque for £.....
made payable to EMAP Business Communications

By invoice: Please invoice my company ❑
By credit card: I authorise you to direct debit my Mastercard/Visa/Diners Club/Amex card for the amount of £.....
Expiry Date...../.....
Card Number:

❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑

Return to *CBW*, Audit House, 260 Field End Road, Eastcote, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 9LT
or phone 0181 956 3140 today

Optare ... The bus stops here.

Len Atkinson has the most boring job in the world but he doesn't mind because he's a detail man, which suits us because Optare's a detail company. From the moment the build team starts in our one-stop shop, Len is over their shoulders making sure that the screws are screwed in tight, and the bolts are bolted on right. So that when it comes to the final inspection Len knows, and the build team knows, that the quality and reliability associated with the Optare name will never be tarnished.

That's why you'll find us very rewarding people to do business with. At Optare quality is not just a promise it's a fact. Every vehicle we build exceeds the industry's most stringent controls. What's more the quality of our product is exceeded only by that of our service.

Try us and you'll understand why, when it comes to leading edge bus solutions, there's no stopping us.

OPTARE

OPTIMUM, THAT'S OPTARE

OPTARE Manston Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS15 8SU **TEL: 0113 264 5182 FAX: 0113 260 6635**